

# The Low Countries as a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs

Edited by  
Arie-Jan Gelderblom  
Jan L. de Jong  
Marc van Vaeck



Intersections

Yearbook  
for Early  
Modern  
Studies

3 - 2003

BRILL

THE LOW COUNTRIES AS A CROSSROADS  
OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

# INTERSECTIONS

YEARBOOK FOR EARLY MODERN STUDIES

VOLUME 3 – 2003

---

## *Editorial Board*

B. BLONDÉ (University of Antwerp)  
K.A.E. ENENKEL (University of Leiden)  
A.J. GELDERBLOM (Utrecht University)  
J.L. DE JONG (University of Groningen)  
E.E.P. KOLFIN (University of Amsterdam)  
W. NEUBER (Free University of Berlin)  
H.F.K. VAN NIEROP (University of Amsterdam)  
P.J. SMITH (University of Leiden)  
M. VAN VAECK (Catholic University of Louvain)

## *Advisory Board*

K. van Berkel (University of Groningen), F. Egmond (National Archives, The Hague)  
A. Grafton (Princeton University), A. Hamilton (University of Leiden)  
G.L. Heesakkers (University of Amsterdam), H.A. Hendrix (Utrecht University)  
F.J. van Ingen (Free University of Amsterdam), J.I. Israel (Princeton University)  
M. Jacobs (Free University of Brussels), K.A. Ottenheim (Utrecht University)  
K. Porteman (Catholic University of Louvain), E.J. Sluijter (University of Amsterdam)



# THE LOW COUNTRIES AS A CROSSROADS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

EDITED BY

ARIE-JAN GELDERBLOM  
JAN L. DE JONG  
MARC VAN VAECK



BRILL  
LEIDEN • BOSTON  
2004

*Illustration on the cover:* Theodorus Beza, *Icones, id est Verae Imagines* [...]. Geneva, Ioannes Laonius, 1580, emblem, no. 39: 'Religio.'

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

The Low Countries as a crossroads of religious beliefs / edited by Arie-Jan Gelderblom, Jan L. de Jong, Marc van Vaeck.

p. cm. — (Intersections, ISSN 1568-1181 ; v. 3)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 90-04-12288-5

1. Reformation—Netherlands. 2. Netherlands—Church history—16th century.  
3. Reformation—Belgium—Antwerp. 4. Antwerp (Belgium)—Church history—  
16th century. I. Gelderblom, Arie-Jan. II. Jong, Jan L. de. III. Vaeck, M. van.  
IV. Intersections (Boston, Mass.); v. 3.

BR395.L69 2004

274.92'06—dc22

2004051821

ISSN 1568-1181

ISBN 90 04 12288 5

© Copyright 2004 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands

*All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.*

*Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Brill provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910 Danvers, MA 01923, USA.  
Fees are subject to change.*

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

## CONTENTS

<i>List of Illustrations</i> .....	vii
<i>Introduction</i> .....	1
HENK VAN NIEROP	
<i>‘Totius Mundi Emporium’: Antwerp as a Centre for Vernacular Bible Translations, 1523–1545</i> .....	9
PAUL ARBLASTER	
<i>Protestant Conversions in an Age of Catholic Reformation: The Case of Sixteenth-Century Antwerp</i> .....	33
GUIDO MARNEF	
<i>Imagines Peregrinantes. The International Genesis and Fate of two Biblical Picture Books (Hiël and Nadal) Conceived in Antwerp at the End of the Sixteenth Century</i> .....	49
RALPH DEKONINCK	
<i>Justus Lipsius’s Treatises on the Holy Virgin</i> .....	65
JEANINE DE LANDTSHEER	
<i>The Religious Position of Abraham Ortelius</i> .....	89
JASON HARRIS	
<i>The quandary of the Dutch Reformed church masters</i> .....	141
MIA M. MOCHIZUKI	
<i>‘A Serpent in the Bosom of Our Dear Fatherland’. Reformed Reaction to the Holland Mission in the Seventeenth Century</i> .....	165
CHRISTINE KOOI	
<i>Obedience with an Attitude. Laity and Clergy in the Dutch Catholic Church of the Seventeenth Century</i> .....	177
CHARLES H. PARKER	

<i>Remarkable Providences. The Dutch Reception of an English Collection of Protestant Wonder Stories</i> .....	197
FRED VAN LIEBURG	
<i>From Minister to Sacred Orator. Homiletics and Rhetoric in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Century Dutch Republic</i> .....	221
P.J. SCHUFFEL	
<i>‘Ardens Martyrii Desiderium’. On the Martyrdom of Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)</i> .....	247
PIETA VAN BEEK	
<i>Cornelis van Bynkershoek and Religion. Reflexions of a Critical Mind in The Hague in 1699 and his Reactions to Crossroads of Religious Beliefs</i> .....	267
J.J.V.M. DE VET	
<i>L’âme amante de son Dieu by Madame Guyon (1717). Pure Love between Antwerp, Paris and Amsterdam, at the Crossroads of Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy</i> .....	297
AGNÈS GUIDERDONI-BRUSLÉ	
<i>Notes on the Editors of this Volume</i> .....	319
<i>List of Contributors</i> .....	321
<i>Index Nominum</i> .....	325

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS\*

*Figures 1 & 2 belong to the article by Guido Marnef:*

1. Image of Our Lady, placed on the facade of the Antwerp City Hall. Engraving in F. Costerus, *De cantico Salve Regina septem meditationes* (Antwerp: C. Plantin), p. A1. (Reprinted with the kind permission of the Ruusbroecgenootschap Library, Antwerp).
2. Description of a heretic, in J. David, *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp: J. Moretus: 1601), plate 8. (Reprinted with the kind permission of the Ruusbroecgenootschap Library, Antwerp).

*Figures 3 & 4 belong to the article by Ralph Dekoninck:*

3. Pieter van der Borcht, Abel's murder by Cain, in Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt, *Imagines et Figuræ Bibliorum* (Leiden: c. 1592) (Photo: Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp).
4. Hieronymus Wierix (after Maarten de Vos), *Adoratio Magorum*, in Hieronymus Natalis, *Evangelicæ historiæ imagines, ex ordine Evangeliorum, quæ toto anno in missæ sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitæ Christi digestæ* (Antwerp: 1593). (Photo: Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp).

*Figures 5–7 belong to the article by Jeanine De Landtsheer:*

5. *Iusti Lipsi Diva virgo Hallensis* (Antwerp: 1604), pp. 14–15. On p. 15 the interior of the church, with the miraculous statue, as Lipsius saw it (Photo: Museum Plantin-Moretus Antwerp, B 1071).
6. The *Sedes Sapientiae* at St Peter's Leuven.
7. *Iusti Lipsi Diva Sichemiensis* (Antwerp: 1605), title-page of the first edition (Photo: Museum Plantin-Moretus Antwerp, A 1371).

---

\* The illustration section (Figs. 1–11) can be found at the end of the Introduction.

*Figures 8 & 9 belong to the article by Mia M. Mochizuki:*

8. Anonymous, *Last Supper*, ca. 1581, oil on panel. (Courtesy of the Hervormde Gemeente Haarlem, Haarlem, The Netherlands).
9. Anonymous, *Siege of Haarlem*, 1581, oil on panel. (Courtesy of the Hervormde Gemeente Haarlem, Haarlem, The Netherlands).

*Figures 10 & 11 belong to the article by Fred van Lieburg:*

10. Title-page of William Turner's major work on remarkable provinces (1697). (Photo: Library Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam).
11. Title-page of the Dutch translation of a part of Turner's work (1738). (Photo: Library Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam).

## INTRODUCTION

Henk van Nierop

In April 1527, the president of the Privy Council in the Netherlands, Jean Carondelet, told a perplexed delegation of magistrates from Amsterdam that he believed that 'Lutheranism,' by that time rampant in their city, was mostly or even entirely due to 'foreigners.' The magistrates, he suggested, were reluctant to punish them severely 'so as not to chase them away.'<sup>1</sup> Even though the delegates indignantly dismissed the allegation—had they not recently sentenced a merchant from Bremen to the pillory for abusing a group of Friars?—the president certainly had a point. The great commercial cities of the Netherlands, such as Amsterdam and especially Antwerp, were situated at a crossroads of important trade routes. Already in the Middle Ages the Low Countries owed their wealth largely to their fortunate geographical position straddling the estuaries of the rivers Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt. Here the trade routes connecting the Baltic, England, the Rhineland and the German hinterland, and the Iberian peninsula and the Mediterranean basin converged. It was inevitable that not only cargoes of grain and timber, silk and spices, woollen cloth and splendidly executed altarpieces were being exchanged in the bustling seaports of the Low Countries, but also manuscripts and books, news, information, ideas and gossip.

Thus the Netherlands were touched by the evangelical Reformation movement at an early stage. Already in July 1523 Brussels witnessed the first ever Protestant martyrs when two Augustinians were publicly burnt as obstinate heretics. Several years later, despite the government's determination to crack down on heretics, the English ambassador to the Low Countries thought that 'if there be three men that speak, the twain keep Luther's opinion.'<sup>2</sup> It was, however, not the

---

<sup>1</sup> *Corpus documentorum inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis Neerlandicae*, ed. Fredericq P. (5 vols., Ghent and The Hague: 1889–1906) v, 207.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Duke A., *Reformation and Revolt in the Low Countries* (London and Ronceverte: 1990) 80.

*causa Lutheri* that bedevilled the Habsburg government and the local magistrates, even if ‘Lutheranism’ was to remain for decades to come a convenient shorthand for many different heretical strands. Due to the absence of influential local reformers such as Luther, Zwingli, or Calvin, but also—and not in the last place—due to its wide-open commercial economy, the Netherlands’ Reformation was essentially an event that should be properly understood in its full international context, as a broad stream fed by many different tributaries.<sup>3</sup>

The connection between trade networks and the interchange of religious ideas was particularly strong in Antwerp, until 1585 by far the most important commercial town. In 1545, for example, almost three quarters of the total value of registered exports from the Netherlands were shipped from that town.<sup>4</sup> Apparently, religious ideas followed trade. ‘A Babylon, confusion and receptacle of all sects indifferently, the town most frequented by pernicious people’, was how the Duke of Alva, admittedly not a sympathetic witness, described Antwerp in 1568. A Spanish soldier who took part in the siege of 1585 claimed that the town sheltered ‘seventeen different religions and ninety-four sects,’ and the Spanish humanist and theologian Benito Arias Montano concurred with his judgement, complaining about ‘Lutherans, Zwinglians, Anabaptists, Calvinists, Adamists, libertines, atheists and innumerable other pestilences.’<sup>5</sup> Antwerp, however, did not only receive heterodox religious ideas; it also digested them, processed them and sent them back into the wider world. As one of Europe’s major printing centres Antwerp churned out an innumerable number of books, bibles, pamphlets and prints for the international market, many of them of dubious orthodoxy.

The situation changed after 1585, when the Spanish army captured the town and the Dutch rebels closed off the river Scheldt,

---

<sup>3</sup> Useful introductions to the Reformation in the Netherlands are Duke A., “The Netherlands” in: Pettegree A. (ed.), *The Reformation in Europe* (Cambridge: 1992) 142–165; Bergsma W., “The Low Countries” in: Scribner B. – Porter R. – and Teich M. (eds.), *The Reformation in national context* (Cambridge: 1994) 67–79, and Woltjer J.J. – Mout M.E.H.N., “Settlements” in: Brady T.A. – Oberman H.A. – Tracy J.D. (eds.), *Handbook of European History 1400–1600. Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation* (2 vols, Leiden, New York, Cologne: 1995) II, 385–415.

<sup>4</sup> Lesger C., *Handel in Amsterdam ten tijde van de Opstand. Kooplieden, commerciële expansie en verandering in de ruimtelijke economie van de Nederlanden ca. 1550–ca. 1630* (Hilversum: 2001) 33. The second export harbour, according to value, was Amsterdam, following at a huge distance with only 6 per cent of the value of registered exports.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation. Underground Protestantism in a commercial metropolis 1550–1577* (Baltimore-London: 1996) xi.

thus strangling the town's trade and prosperity and putting an effective end to its leading position as an intellectual powerhouse. During the following century Antwerp's position as an international entrepot of trade and ideas, philosophy and learning (religious and otherwise) was taken over by Amsterdam. While Antwerp became a bulwark of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, Amsterdam, along with other towns in the Dutch Republic, became a melting-pot, a laboratory where many religious ideas flowed together, amalgamated and were re-exported, both to Europe and the newly discovered worlds overseas. The political context could not be more different. If in Antwerp, due to the ever-vigilant ecclesiastical authorities, heterodox ideas could only be expressed in secrecy, the towns of the United Netherlands did not only tolerate, but in certain cases even welcomed religious fugitives and thereby actively promoted religious pluriformity.

The Reformed Church never succeeded in taking over the monopoly on organised religion formerly possessed by the Catholic Church. Although its ministers constantly admonished the civil magistrates to be vigilant against Protestant dissenters and—especially—Catholics, their confessional drive was only partly successful. Thus the towns in the Dutch Republic and particularly Amsterdam took over Antwerp's dubious reputation as a safe haven for the unorthodox. 'It is well known,' the Reformed Swiss military officer Jean-Baptiste Stoupe wrote in 1673, 'that in addition to the Reformed, there are Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Brownists, Independents, Arminians, Anabaptists, Socinians, Arians, Enthusiasts, Quakers, Borelists, Muscovites, Libertines and many more . . . I am not even speaking of the Jews, Turks and Persians.'<sup>6</sup>

The Low Countries thus played an important part in the early modern era as a crossroads for religious and philosophical ideas, serving as an intermediary between different parts of the world. The third volume of *Intersections* is devoted to this aspect of the 'intertraffic of the mind.'<sup>7</sup> Its multidisciplinary approach is focused on the exchange

---

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Hsia R.P.C., "Introduction" in: Hsia R.P.C., Van Nierop H. (eds.), *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: 2002) 1.

<sup>7</sup> Schoneveld C.W., *Intertraffic of the Mind. Studies in Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Dutch Translation with a Checklist of Books Translated from English into Dutch, 1600–1700* (Leiden: 1983).

of ideas and the interactions between religious groups in the Low Countries between ca. 1520 and 1750.

The thirteen essays in this volume are arranged in a roughly chronological order. It is inevitable, given the economic and cultural preponderance of the Southern provinces during the sixteenth century, that the first essays explore 'Southern' topics—in most cases Antwerp topics—and that the focus thereafter swings to the North.

In the first essay Paul Arblaster analyses the position of Antwerp as a centre for vernacular Bible translations between 1523 and 1545, by which date the town had lost its leading edge due to increasingly severe government repression. He argues that Antwerp was not in the first place a 'crossroads' where Bible translators such as Tyndale, Pedersen and Lefèvre could meet and converse, but rather 'a round-about with traffic lights, where traffic in different directions was kept carefully separate.' Three different types of biblical translation, based on different principles, appealed to different international markets.

Guido Marnef in his contribution focuses on the large-scale conversions to Catholicism and the reconciliations during the reign of the Duke of Alva and again during the years following the capitulation of the town in 1585. His figures of those who returned to the old Church must be seen against Antwerp's dramatically declining population, which was not only a result of Protestants moving to the rebellious provinces, but also of economic emigration. By the end of the century, systematic religious education and propaganda contributed to a specific Catholic identity. Antwerp subsequently ceased to be a crossroads of religious ideas and became rather a frontier of faith, a dam or barrier against Protestantism in the North.

Ralph Dekoninck compares the genesis and fate of two biblical picture books published in Antwerp at the end of the sixteenth century, one by Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt, or 'Hiël,' the charismatic leader of the 'second' Family of Love, the other by the Jesuit Hieronymus Natalis (Nadal). The two books were to have strikingly different fates, for Hiël's book was to inspire spiritualists in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whilst Nadal's work was to become a paradigmatic monument of Jesuit engraving and Counter-Reformation spirituality. Yet the author argues that despite the obvious differences between Familist and Jesuit spiritualities the two works shared a religious sensibility that was remarkably similar, and he invites us to be sensitive to continuities spanning the break of 1585.

The following two papers explore two significant individual cases of religious convictions being shaped in an international context. Jeanine De Landtsheer writes about Justus Lipsius, a culture-hero and best-selling author of international stature. Lipsius after his return from Leiden to Louvain and after his reconciliation with the Catholic Church wished to demonstrate the seriousness of his intent by writing several treatises on miraculous shrines of the Virgin Mary, to the disgust of his Protestant admirers, especially in the Northern provinces. De Landtsheer's paper suggests that we should regard Lipsius's Counter-Reformation writings with a more dispassionate eye.

The religious position of Lipsius's friend, the Antwerp geographer Abraham Ortelius, is the subject of a paper by Jason Harris. His elaborate and subtle scrutiny of the sources demonstrates that Ortelius was not, as has been often alleged, a follower of the Family of Love. Rather, from his early encounter with reforming ideas to his later reading of the stoics, mystics, Jacobus Acontius and, above all, Sebastian Franck, it appears that he maintained a life-long interest in Reformation ideas without, however, ever embracing Protestantism. Remaining in Antwerp, from where he kept in contact with correspondents scattered all over Europe, he had little choice but conforming outwardly to Catholicism, whilst privately disregarding confessional boundaries, insisting on internal rather than external devotion, and dissimulating rather than facing martyrdom. His case, too, suggests that there is more continuity beyond 1585 than is often suggested.

All following papers deal with religious trends and developments in the Dutch Republic. Mia Mochizuki discusses Dutch church decoration after the break with Rome in the context of the ideas of Erasmus, Zwingli and Calvin. Images were replaced by visual representations of the Word. Mochizuki's contribution focuses on a large text panel in Haarlem's main church. One side of this panel features a text about the *Avontmael* (Holy Supper), while the other side of the panel is dedicated to a description of the siege of Haarlem by the Spaniards in 1572–1573. The panel reflects the ambivalent position of the Dutch Reformed Church. On the one hand church buildings were town property. The buildings were put at the disposal of the Reformed community but the wardens were appointed by the civic magistrates. The civic text therefore faced the nave, the public side of the Church which was not only used as a place for

preaching but also as a meeting place for citizens. The Haarlem panel to some extent reflects the 'ambivalent face of Calvinism in the Netherlands,'<sup>8</sup> where only a relatively small number of believers became full members of the Reformed Church and took part in Holy Supper, which was often celebrated in the church's choir, from where the panel's Avontmael text could be seen.

The following two papers deal with religious identities of the Reformed and the Catholics respectively. Christine Kooi explores Reformed rhetoric against the activities of the Catholic mission in the Dutch Republic. The verbal hostility of the ministers against 'popery' and 'idolatry' became a significant part of a specifically Reformed confessional culture and it served the construction of a Reformed self-image. This public hostility is difficult to square with another characteristic of Dutch religious culture, diversity; yet interaction between Protestants and Catholics, Kooi argues, could be quite amicable.

Charles Parker in his essay explores the relations between Catholic clergy and laity in creating a Dutch Catholic identity. Basing his research on the copious correspondence between lay leaders and clergy in the archives of the apostolic vicars in Utrecht, Parker sketches out some of the chief ways in which lay folk interacted with their priests to suggest the importance of the clergy in Dutch lay identity. His study *suggests* that the development of religious piety in the seventeenth century was a negotiated process between laity and clergy. Even without the support of the state, Tridentine Catholicism firmly took root among the laity, and local lay leaders welcomed the Holland Mission's programme of clerical reform.

Fred van Lieburg discusses the reception in the Dutch Republic of a translated volume of providential writings by the English Puritan author William Turner. Studying the background, contents and reception of the Dutch translation Van Lieburg highlights international traditions of religious communication. His paper suggests that Protestants, however dismissive they may have been as to superstition and idolatry, resembled Catholics in stressing the significance of divine providence.

The paper by Jaconelle Schuffel explores the changing relationship between Reformed homiletics and rhetoric. Taking a very long

---

<sup>8</sup> Duke, *Reformation and Revolt* (note 2), 269–293.

perspective that takes us back to the writings of Chrysostom and Augustine, she concludes that a significant aspect of preaching theory during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries was that views on *inventio* and *dispositio* remained largely the same, whilst the treatment of *elocutio* and *acutio* was revolutionised.

The last three contributions explore individual cases that reflect, to a greater or lesser degree, the openness of the Dutch Republic to religious influences from abroad. Pieta van Beek argues that the learned woman scholar Anna Maria van Schurman left the Reformed Church and joined the radical sect led by Jean de Labadie because she was attracted by the idea of martyrdom. J.J.V.M. de Vet considers the case of Cornelis van Bynkershoek, the author and publisher of a short-lived critical journal in 1699 in which he criticized and ridiculed all forms of organised religion and thus became a representative of the early Enlightenment. Agnès Guiderdoni, finally, discusses the case of Pierre Poiret, a Protestant pastor, in the Dutch Republic who published two emblem book written by a Catholic mystic, Madame Guyon, whose work, in its turn, was based on two earlier volumes, one Catholic, the other Protestant. The recycling of emblematical material suggests that emblems could easily be detached from their original spiritual context and could be made to function in an entirely different confessional setting—a conclusion that reminds one of Ralph Dekoninck's suggestion that Jesuit and Familist picture books were rooted in a comparable spirituality.

The thirteen essays collected in this volume do not reveal any single, clear pattern. By highlighting a number of very different individual cases, they illustrate the openness of the Low Countries' society for intellectual influences from abroad. This conclusion should, of course, hardly come as a surprise. Yet they also show that the various religious strands, in spite of their own claims of being unique and the 'only true one', were more indebted to each other than their adherents realised or might have liked to admit. Despite their differences, they all drew from the same sources. The streams flowing from these sources were canalised in different directions. Looking from a distance of several centuries, we now see that these canals often flowed parallel and frequently ran into each other. Thus their waters constantly intermingled, generating an incessant flow of fresh ideas to fertilise the soil of the Low Countries.

*This page intentionally left blank*

‘TOTIUS MUNDI EMPORIUM’:  
ANTWERP AS A CENTRE FOR VERNACULAR  
BIBLE TRANSLATIONS 1523–1545\*

Paul Arblaster

Between 1523 and 1545 Antwerp was the main international centre for the printing of vernacular bible translations. A handful of printers in the city brought out translations of the New Testament into Dutch and French, and then into English, Danish, Italian and Spanish, as well as translations of other books of the Bible, and even whole bibles. The first complete bibles in print in Dutch (1526), French (1530) and, almost certainly, English (1535) all appeared in close proximity in Antwerp’s printing district. And yet it was not exactly a crossroads: the Kammenstraat and the Lombardenvest, the two streets in which the printing shops in question stood, formed more of a T-junction.

The political importance of these translations is underlined by Quentin Skinner in his *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*:

The application of humanist techniques to the Bible had a profound impact on the development of sixteenth century political thought. The main channel of influence in this case was provided by the growing number of humanists who devoted themselves to translating the Scriptures. Erasmus’s plea for the Bible to be made available in the vernacular was rapidly and very widely answered: by Lefèvre d’Etaples in France, Tyndale in England, Pedersen in Denmark, Petri in Sweden and Luther himself in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

---

\* This essay presents in condensed form, and with the focus on Antwerp rather than on William Tyndale, the reading behind the exhibition *Tyndale’s Testament*, held in the Plantin Moretus Museum of Printing in Antwerp from 2 September to 1 December 2002, and the exhibition catalogue, *Tyndale’s Testament*, edited by Paul Arblaster, Gergely Juhász and Guido Latré (Turnhout: 2002) with contributions by Francine de Nave, Andrew Hope, Gilbert Tournoy, Jean-François Gilmont and Paolo Sartori. The exhibition and catalogue arose from a four-year research project, ‘The First English Bibles in Print, 1526–1537’, under the direction of Guido Latré and funded by the K.U. Leuven, the Catholic University of Louvain. My thanks to all those mentioned and to Wim François.

<sup>1</sup> Skinner Q., *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 1: The Renaissance (Cambridge: 1978) 212.

With all the respect due to Skinner's scholarship, it is striking that in this passage there is nothing to suggest that 'Lefèvre d'Etaples in France, Tyndale in England, Pedersen in Denmark' might as well be 'Lefèvre d'Etaples in exile in Strasbourg, Tyndale in exile in Antwerp, Pedersen in exile in Lier'. Nor that the biblical translations of Lefèvre, Tyndale and Pedersen were for the most part printed in Antwerp, as were their accompanying devotional, explanatory and apologetical writings. The failure is not made good in his more detailed second volume, subtitled *The Reformation*. Furthermore, although Skinner shows himself well aware of the Low Countries elsewhere, he fails to mention them at all in the passage just quoted. The reason is presumably stylistic: a man and a country stand synecdochally for translation into each language. Since the Dutch translations were anonymous, and more varied than those in any other language except German, they do not fit the pattern of the prose. Incidentally, the man-per-country listing also glosses over the importance of secondary figures, such as George Joye and Miles Coverdale in the case of English translations.

This is not to take issue with Skinner in particular. That so careful a contextualizer is guilty of eliding the importance of exile and of international contacts (with Antwerp at their centre) in the history of early Reformation Bible translation is merely indicative of the blind-spots of even the best writers on the subject. A specialist work such as the *Cambridge History of the Bible* touches on the importance of Antwerp in two sentences, but leaves it at that.<sup>2</sup> The rise of book history is perhaps removing the worst distortions from the picture,<sup>3</sup> but it is still worth emphasizing that early sixteenth-century Antwerp, for Bible translations as for so much else, was 'non Brabantiae sed totius mundi emporium'.<sup>4</sup> A multilingual translation dictionary printed in the city in 1540 contained a Latin key and vocabulary in Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, English and German—all the languages which somebody doing business in Antwerp might need.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 2, *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. S.L. Greenslade (Cambridge: 1963) 435–436.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Gilmont J.-Fr. (ed.), *The Reformation and the Book*, ed. and transl. Karin Maag, St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History (Aldershot: 1998).

<sup>4</sup> The expression is from Roger Ascham, Princess Elizabeth's tutor, quoted as the epigraph of Ramsay G.D., *The City of London in International Politics at the Accession of Elizabeth Tudor* (Manchester: 1975).

<sup>5</sup> Arblaster P. – Juhász G. – Latré G. (eds.), *Tyndale's Testament*, exhibition catalogue (Turnhout: 2002) 79–80.

In the course of the twenty year period 1523–1543 Antwerp printers brought out New Testaments in all these languages except German, plus in Danish.

But while the busty temptress Anne Boleyn might have a penchant for French evangelical works, there was no general demand for French Scriptures in England, or *mutatis mutandis* for the other vernaculars in other foreign countries. So was Antwerp a crossroads, where Tyndale, Pedersen and Lefèvre (to name but those three) could meet and converse—or was it more of a roundabout with traffic lights, where traffic going in different directions was kept carefully separate? Before answering that question, let us consider the history of Bible printing in Antwerp, and in the Low Countries more generally.

### *The Middle Dutch Tradition*

The fifteenth century had seen the printing of a number of biblical translations, most famously the Delft Bible of 1477. The texts of these went back to translations by Catholic moral reformers of the fourteenth century, in the tradition of Ruysbroeck and the emerging *Devotio Moderna*. The first vernacular biblical texts to be printed in Antwerp, around 1500, were a continuation of this Middle Dutch tradition: they were translations of the psalter and the lectionary, clearly intended as aids to customary liturgical and semi-liturgical devotions.<sup>6</sup> In December 1513 Claes de Grave and Jan van der Noot, of Antwerp and Brussels, brought out *Den Bibel int Corte*, a Dutch translation of a French *Bible historiale*. This is not quite the same sort of work—it is hardly a book somebody would take to church so they could follow the service more easily—but it is still entirely within the conventions of late medieval piety. The popularity of the tome can be judged from the new editions brought out in 1516 and 1518. What might be called semi-biblical works were also popular. One such was a late-fifteenth-century Dutch version of Ludolph of Saxony’s fourteenth-century *Vita Christi*.<sup>7</sup> This was cast in the form of a dialogue in which ‘Die mensche’ interrogates ‘Scriptura’, a lady with the answers to all his religious questions. In England the same market niche was filled by Nicholas Love’s *Mirror*

<sup>6</sup> Tyndale’s *Testament* (note 5) 107–113.

<sup>7</sup> *Tboeck vanden leven ons heeren ihesu* (Antwerp: 3 November 1487).

of the *Life of Christ*, printed by Caxton and repeatedly reprinted throughout the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and now available in several scholarly editions.

Not all may be quite as conventional as it seems in some of these publications. A meditation on Christ's trial, in a book printed by Adriaen van Berghen (soon to be a clearly Lutheran publisher), has the high priests as 'bishops' (*biscoppen*).<sup>8</sup> This calls up images of fifteenth-century Waldensians before the ecclesiastical tribunals, but it is a link which contemporary readers might not have made. The erasure of cultural and institutional change is one characteristic of many of these translations, without any appearance of heterodox intent. *Den Bibel int Corte*, for instance, has Aaron as the 'bishop' of Israel, and in the Ten Commandments what we translate 'neighbour' appears as 'fellow Christian' (*even kersten*).

### *The Erasmian Renewal*

In 1522 the picture begins to change radically. The transformation of late-medieval ways of thought had already become apparent with Erasmus's *Enchiridion militis christiani*, first printed in Antwerp in 1504, which took off as a steady seller with the first Strasbourg edition of 1515.<sup>9</sup> To forward the progress of the evangelical *philosophia christi* which he had advocated in the *Enchiridion*, Erasmus produced a translation of the Greek New Testament into a new Latin version which had more classical elegance than did the late-antique Vulgate. Erasmus's translation first appeared in Basle in 1516, parallel with his edition of the Greek. In the course of 1519–1523 it was reprinted (without the Greek) in Louvain, Zwolle and Deventer. Erasmus went on to write Latin paraphrases of the Gospels in his attempt to make them appealing to Renaissance literati.

In the prefatory material to various editions of his New Testament and other scriptural writings, Erasmus promoted reading the Gospel as a means to living it. In the prologue to his paraphrase of the Gospel according to Matthew he called for vernacular translations

---

<sup>8</sup> *Dat leven ons heren Ihesu cristi* (Antwerp: 17 October 1503).

<sup>9</sup> See *Tyndale's Testament* (note 5) 130.

which would enable ‘the farmer, the smith and the mason’ to read the Scriptures (*Sacros Libros leget agricola, leget faber, leget latomus*). This was dated January 1522, and before the year was out Doen Pietersz. of Amsterdam had printed a new Dutch translation of the Gospel of Matthew, the work of the Franciscan friar Johan Pelt. This was partly based on the Vulgate, but Pelt took Erasmus’s translation and annotations as his guide in doubtful places. The dissemination of Erasmian ideas in the vernacular was stimulated further in 1523, when Jan van Ghelen in Antwerp and Doen Pietersz. in Amsterdam almost simultaneously brought out translations of the *Enchiridion*, as *Den kerstelicken Ridder* and *Van die kerstelijcke ridder*.

The first complete Dutch translation of the New Testament to be based entirely on Erasmus’s Latin version was made available by Cornelis Henricsz. Lettersnyder of Delft in 1524. The prologue shows an early attempt at split level marketing: besides explaining basic punctuation marks, the editor also gave guidance concerning the intricate apparatus of differing typefaces and brackets which indicated textual variants, words inserted to make the meaning plain and so forth. The translation was reprinted in 1525 by Jan van Ghelen of Antwerp, but without the textual apparatus of the Delft edition. Perhaps, after all, vernacular readers were not best served with the paraphernalia of humanist textual criticism. By this time the new impetus given to a vernacular understanding of Erasmian evangelical life was coming into competition from Lutheran evangelical faith.

### *The First Dutch Lutheran Versions*<sup>10</sup>

In 1523 Dutch translations of the New Testament clearly based on Luther’s *Septembertestament* appeared both in Antwerp, from the press of Adriaen van Berghen, and in Amsterdam, printed by Doen Pietersz. Both of these New Testaments were printed in parts which could

---

<sup>10</sup> The term ‘Lutheran’ has no clear definition before some degree of doctrinal precision was given to it by the Confession of Augsburg. It will be used here, as in Charles V’s heresy edicts, to denote various strands of Protestantism distinct from Anabaptism and broadly inspired or influenced by Luther while not always in accordance with him at every point.

be bound separately or together. In the same year Adriaen van Berghen also printed a French New Testament, the first signs of working for a wider market, and in Leiden Jan Seversz. printed a *Summa der Godliker Scrifturen oft een duytsche Theologie*, the first Dutch aid to Lutheran scriptural theology and one of the first printed books to be banned in the Low Countries.<sup>11</sup>

Antwerp printers, at least in their biblical editions, skipped Erasmus and went straight to Luther. Just as Erasmus's edition of the Greek New Testament rapidly became the scholarly standard (although his main concern, the new Latin translation, never really took off), the Lutheran translations transformed the market for vernacular bibles entirely. The medieval translations simply went out of print. Henceforth, a modern translation of the New Testament could be one of three types: an Erasmian version, a Lutheran version, or a conservative revision of a Lutheran or Erasmian translation to bring it into line with the Vulgate.<sup>12</sup>

The printing of Lutheran New Testaments in Antwerp is not the first sign of Lutheranism in the city. It is rather an indication that there was already substantial demand for Lutheran scriptures. The nearest church to the printing district, in the streets between the minster churchyard and the old Kammenpoort, was that of the Augustinian hermits of the congregation of Saxony. Luther's controversial theses about indulgences and related theological issues were tacked up on 31 October 1517. By the end of the year his brother in religion Jacob Proost, prior of the Antwerp house, was disseminating Luther's propositions in the Low Countries. Lutheran ideas had had six years to incubate and multiply in Antwerp by the time the first Lutheran bible translations appeared. Which is not to say that the printers were slow to respond to changing market conditions. Quite the reverse: Luther's own German translation had only been published in September 1522. Pietersz. and Van Berghen must have set to work pretty sharply to get Dutch versions out the following year.

---

<sup>11</sup> See Trapman J., *De Summa der Godliker Scrifturen (1523)* (Leiden: 1978).

<sup>12</sup> For the interrelationship of editions in Dutch see Hollander A.A. den, *De Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen 1522–1545*, *Bibliotheca bibliographica Neerlandica* 33 (Nieuwkoop: 1997), English summary 513–519.

*The Legal Reaction to Lutheranism*

But between 1517 and 1523 disseminating specifically Lutheran ideas had become more hazardous. The first printings of Lutheran New Testaments in the Low Countries happened to coincide with the first effective threats to the physical well-being of Lutherans. The universities of Cologne and Leuven had condemned a number of Luther's propositions in 1519. The Pope followed in 1520, condemning forty-one articles taken from Luther's writings. Rather than renounce his errors, Luther was moving ever further away from traditional orthodoxy and in 1521 the imperial ban was pronounced against him at Worms, in the presence of Charles V. In the Low Countries the Edict of Worms was slightly redrafted before being issued, with the addition of clauses to the effect that trials should be conducted by 'the ordinary judges of the places where they are, or by our parliaments, councils or others who take cognizance thereof', and 'in accordance with the customs and laws spiritual and temporal, and godly edicts proclaimed publicly against those who offend in the matter of heresy'.<sup>13</sup> The 'ordinary judges' of Antwerp were the city magistrates, and their customary punishments for those who contravened the laws on religion were fines, the pillory and banishment. The city records show that when they could not avoid taking cognizance of such offenses these were the sentences they continued to apply.<sup>14</sup>

The relative leniency of Antwerp's magistrates in cases of heresy was a matter of concern to the central authorities of Brabant. Only after the papal nuncio intervened with Charles V were diocesan officials able to have charges brought against Jacob Proost. Even then, in accordance with a fifteenth-century concordat between the city and the bishop of Cambrai, the charges had to be brought in Antwerp's civic courts. Five cases, including that of Proost, came before the magistrates of Antwerp in 1522. Proost himself recanted, but later relapsed and fled to Germany; two other suspects escaped

---

<sup>13</sup> 'bij den ordinariissen rechteren of jugen van den plaetsen, daar zij wesen zullen ofte bij onsen parlementen, raden oft ander, dien die kennisse daer af toebehooren (...) achtervolghende die costumen ende rechten, gheestelick ense weerlick ende goddeliche edicten, uutghegheven gheboden teghen die ghene, die in ketterie (...) mesdoen'.

<sup>14</sup> Génard P., "Personnes poursuivies judiciairement à Anvers, au XVI<sup>e</sup>, pour le 'faict de religion'—Liste et pièces officielles à l'appui", *Antwerpsch Archievenblad* 7 (n.d.) 114–303; and the tables in *Antwerpsch Archievenblad* 14 (n.d.) 2–15.

(one through the riotous intervention of a crowd of women); and of the two eventually brought to trial, one was fined and the other released.<sup>15</sup>

This clear failure of customary law to repress heresy led Charles V to set up a heresy commission, headed by the lawyer Francis van der Hulst assisted by three ecclesiastics. It was in effect a state inquisition on the Spanish model. The heresy commissioners' first move was against the Antwerp Augustinians, eighteen of whom were placed under arrest in the castle of Vilvoorde, the main state prison of Brabant. Sixteen recanted, but on 1 July 1523 two were sent to the stake in Brussels: Henricus Voes and Joannes van Essen, the first martyrs of the Protestant Reformation. The Augustinian house in Antwerp was disbanded, and the church converted into a new parish church.

In March 1524 thirty-eight people were charged before the magistrates of Antwerp with frequenting secret conventicles: all were pardoned. But then in 1525 another Augustinian, Brother Nicholas, was thrown into the Scheldt in a sack, the first Protestant to die for his beliefs in Antwerp itself.<sup>16</sup> It was not until 1533 that another two Lutherans, a carpenter and an armourer, were executed for religion in Antwerp.<sup>17</sup> In August 1534 the printer Adriaen van Berghen, together with the schoolmaster Franchoy de Penyn and his wife, was charged with disseminating and keeping prohibited books: he was sentenced to a penitential pilgrimage to Nicosia, but instead moved to Holland.<sup>18</sup> Only with the Anabaptist panic of 1535 did more rigorous persecution commence.

Stricter laws against heresy were proclaimed for Holland, Zeeland and Friesland in the course of 1524 and 1525, but it was only in the summer of 1526 that the law was tightened in the southernmost provinces of the Low Countries, including Brabant. These procla-

---

<sup>15</sup> Moreau E. de, *Histoire de l'Eglise en Belgique*, vol. 4, Museum Lessianum, Section historique 12 (Brussels: 1949) 242.

<sup>16</sup> F.G.V., *Antwerpsch Chronyckje, in het welk zeer veele en elders te vergeefs gezogte geschiedenissen, sedert den Jare 1500. tot het Jaar 1574*, anonymously edited (Leiden: 1743) 25.

<sup>17</sup> Prims F., *Geschiedenis van Antwerpen*, vol. 7 pt. 1 (Brussels: 1938) 148–149. In the intervening period, two heretics had been sentenced to mutilation of the tongue, according to F.G.V., *Antwerpsch Chronyckje*, 20, 26, 32.

<sup>18</sup> Génard, "Personnes poursuivies" (note 14) 290–292, 298–303, 306–310, 323–324, 345–346.

mations proscribed a number of New Testaments by name, and finally in 1526 contained a blanket ban on biblical translations ‘in duitsch, vlaemsch ofte walsche’ which were ‘apostillated, glossed, or having prefaces or prologues, containing the errors or doctrine of the aforesaid Luther and his adherents’.<sup>19</sup> Unlike England or France, where the ecclesiastical authorities claimed the right to licence translations, the authorities in the Low Countries drew the line in the paratextual apparatus.<sup>20</sup> In the meantime, the printing of Dutch biblical translations was proceeding apace.

### *The Proliferation of Dutch Lutheran Versions*

The Lutheran New Testaments of 1523 had been printed in parts that could be sold separately or bound up together. In response to the legal measures of 1524 Van Berghen brought out a new edition of the Epistles, free of Lutheran marginal notes. One surviving volume actually has Pietersz.’s Amsterdam edition of the Gospels and of the Acts and Apocalypse bound in with Van Berghen’s 1524 edition of the Epistles, so that the owner could not be compromised by heretical glosses.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the growing government opposition to Lutheran ideas, Lutheran New Testaments were too tempting a trade to pass by. In 1525 four different Lutheran New Testaments came onto the market

---

<sup>19</sup> ‘gheappostilleert, ghegloseert, oft hebbende priefatie of prologue, inhoudende dolinghen, erreuren ofte doctrine van den voorseyden Luther ende zyne adherenten’, *Ordinantien ende Statuten dye de Keyserlyjcke Majesteyt in zijnder teghenwoordicheyt opden .vij. dach Octobris Int Jaer M.CCCC.xxxi. heeft doen lesen ende verklaren den Staten van sinen landen van herwaerts over, ende de welcke aldaer wt geroepen ende gepubliceert zijn geweest opten .xv. dach Novembris daer aen volghende, so om te extirperen ende te verdrijven de Lutheraensche ende andere ghereprobeerde secten, ende te versiene op de ongeregeltheit van der munten, als om ordine te stellen op die policie vanden voorseyden landen, tot der ghemeyn welvaert ende commoditeyt van dien* (Antwerp: Willem Vorsterman and Michiel [Hillen] van Hoochstraten, 15 November 1531).

<sup>20</sup> For the most recent discussions see François W., “De Leuvense theologen en de eerste gedrukte bijbels in de volkstaal (1522–1533). Een feitelijk gedoogbeleid?”, *Trajecta* 11 (2002) 244–276; and Hollander A.A. den, “Forbidden Bibles. Paratext and the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. Why Dutch Bibles were placed on the 1546 Louvain Index”, in *Paratext and Megatext as Channels of Jewish and Christian Traditions. The Textual Markers of Contextualization*, eds. August den Hollander – Ulrich Schmidt – Willem Smelik, Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series (Leiden: 2003) 152–175.

<sup>21</sup> Ghent, University Library, Res. 806.

in Antwerp alone, and a Dutch New Testament based on Luther's was even printed in Cologne. The year 1525 also saw the first new Dutch version of the Old Testament, *Die Bibel int duitsche neerstelick overgheset: ende gecorrigeert tot profite van allen kersten menschen*, printed in four handy sextodecimo volumes by Hans van Ruremund for Peter Kaetz. This was largely a revision of the 1477 Delft Bible (itself going back to a version of 1360) in the light of Erasmian and Lutheran scholarship, and using the newly available German Lutheran versions as the basis for the Pentateuch and the Psalms. The book of Maccabees (the canonicity of which was called into question by some humanists) was listed on the title page but omitted from the volume. The deficiency was made good by Christoffel van Ruremund in 1526, with the *Boeck der Machabeen*. In 1526 Hans van Ruremund also printed a sextodecimo New Testament for Peter Kaetz, so that the whole Bible was available in a series of pocket-sized volumes. Not all buyers necessarily bought the whole set, and other editions of the New Testament could be bound as a companion volume. The eighteenth-century collector Isaac le Long had a set with a Low German New Testament, and the set in the collection of the Plantin-Moretus Museum has Christoffel van Ruremund's 1526 octavo New Testament cut down and bound to match.

This last publication, Christoffel van Ruremund's New Testament, provided a lightly revised Lutheran translation without dangerous Lutheran glosses or prologues. The title page ran:

The holy Gospel the living word of God pronounced by our saviour Jesus Christ, written by inspiration of the holy spirit by the holy Apostles and Evangelists. And the Epistles of Saints Paul and Peter, and further the other Epistles, Acts and the Apocalypse printed with figures without glosses and prologues. The whole new Testament.<sup>22</sup>

It was not unusual for title pages to function as advertisements, and to present a programmatic description of the work. That all the books of the New Testament were here available printed as a single volume was worth advertising, although it had been done before (by

---

<sup>22</sup> *Dat heylich Evangelium dat levende woort Godts wtghesproken door onsen salichmaker Jesum Christum, beschreven doort ingeven des heylighen gheest vanden heylighen Apostolen ende Evangelisten. Ende die Epistelen Sinte Pauwels ende Peeters, ende voort dye andere Epistelen, Geschiedenissen ende die Openbaringhe met Figuren ghedruct sonder glosen, ende prologhen. Dat gheheel nyeuwe Testament.*

Hans van Ruremund for Peter Kaetz in 1525, for instance). That there was no marginal or introductory matter liable to get a reader into trouble with the law was also clearly a selling point. Unadvertised on the title page, but available in the first section of the volume, were the Eusebian canons. This is a set of tables, developed by the third-century bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, which show parallel passages in the Gospels. It enables the reader to check whether, and where, a passage in one Gospel was to be found in another. The inclusion of such aids to study in vernacular translations suggests that some readers without Latin could still be expected to engage with the Scriptures in a fairly sophisticated fashion.

Doen Pietersz. of Amsterdam printed a five-volume Old Testament in 1527, but by then the whole Bible was available in Dutch in one folio volume. The Dutch Bible in the iconic form of a single codex was printed by Jacob van Liesvelt in 1526.<sup>23</sup> It became the bible of choice for sixteenth-century Dutch Protestants. The title, *Dat oude ende dat nieuwe testament*, draws attention to the presence in a single volume of both the Old and New Testaments, already available from Peter Kaetz as a series of pocket-sized volumes. In so far as Luther’s translations were available, the 1526 Liesvelt Bible followed them. It went through three more editions (1532, 1534, 1542), and was also the basis for the Dutch bibles printed in Antwerp by Henric Peetersen van Middelburg (1535) and by Hansken van Liesvelt (1538). Up to 1538 each new edition was revised to bring it into line with Luther’s most recent work. The clearly Lutheran marginal glosses in the 1542 edition sparked an investigation that cost Liesvelt his head. He had twice been cleared of charges relating to heretical printing and bookdealing in the mid-1530s, but times were changing.

### *French Evangelicalism*

The first complete Bible in French, printed in Antwerp in 1530, was similarly preceded by a number of smaller biblical editions. As has been mentioned, these also began in 1523, with a *Nouveau Testament*

---

<sup>23</sup> Hollander A. den, “‘Dat oude ende dat nieuwe testament’ (1526). Jacob van Liesvelt en de nieuwe markt voor bijbels in de zestiende eeuw”, *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis* 6 (1999) 105–122.

printed in two parts. The production of French scriptural publications in Antwerp was greatly stimulated by the resistance of the established authorities in France to new versions.

The main figure in early French evangelicalism was Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, a Paris Master of Arts and leading humanist scholar who never broke with the Catholic Church.<sup>24</sup> Before 1525 the patronage of the king and of the bishop of Meaux (a former pupil) protected Lefèvre from his enemies in the Paris Faculty of Theology. When Francis I was captured at the Battle of Pavia, and spent a year as a prisoner of Charles V, the Sorbonne and the Parliament of Paris moved against the reforming circle which had established itself in Meaux, and Lefèvre fled to Strasbourg. The Parisian printer Martin Lempereur also left the country, settling in Antwerp and printing Lefèvre's translations (and other French evangelical works) there. Martin Lempereur was not alone: Willem Vorsterman took a hand in printing French biblical translations, and in 1529 Lempereur and Vorsterman brought out a joint edition of Lefèvre's French New Testament. Around the same time Lempereur brought out the Old Testament in French, in four parts, and in 1530 came the first full French Bible in print, also issued from his press. A second edition was to follow in 1534, probably revised by an Antwerp corrector in the light of the latest Parisian Vulgate scholarship (much of which was reprinted in Antwerp).<sup>25</sup>

Despite his humanist doubts about the value of the Vulgate, Lefèvre took it as the basis for his translation on the grounds that it was the bible that had been in public use in the Church for a thousand years. No basic doctrinal position actually depended on the use of a specific Greek or Latin version, and to reject the Vulgate would cause needless resistance to evangelical piety. This more conservatively evangelical approach was to dominate the Antwerp production of biblical material in French, and also began to make itself felt in Dutch biblical publications alongside the influences from Basle and Wittenberg.

---

<sup>24</sup> Boulding M.C., "Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, c. 1460–1536", in *Opening the Scrolls*, ed. D.A. Bellenger (Bath: 1987) 27–49.

<sup>25</sup> *Tyndale's Testament* (note 5) 130–135.

*Englishmen, Danes, Italians, Spaniards*

A very different attitude was taken by the first modern English Bible translator, William Tyndale. He rejected the Vulgate entirely, working instead from Erasmus's Greek (probably the third edition of 1522) and turning to Erasmus's Latin and Luther's German when in doubt. He completed his New Testament translation in Germany in 1525, and it was printed in Worms in 1526. Before the year was out an enterprising Antwerp printer with trade connections in England had brought out an unauthorized edition, the first of several. Attempts by the English authorities to have action taken at source against the printers and smugglers of this New Testament ran up against the reluctance of Antwerp's magistrates to interfere with foreign merchants or to relinquish a citizen to an external tribunal.<sup>26</sup> Soon (in 1527 or 1528) Tyndale himself moved to Antwerp, attracted by the presence of a well-developed printing trade and the relative tolerance of Antwerp's magistrates, but perhaps above all by the relative ease with which his works could be smuggled from there to England.

In 1530 Tyndale's translation of the Pentateuch was printed in five volumes, and in 1534 his revised Genesis and New Testament appeared. In the meantime he had translated Jonah and written a number of polemical pamphlets defending his translation and promoting his understanding of the authority and interpretation of the Bible. With the exception of the first edition of his New Testament all these works were printed in Antwerp, many of them by Martin Lempereur. Tyndale had a theological rival and translationary ally in George Joye, who translated the Psalms, Isaiah and Jeremiah, also for publication by Martin Lempereur.<sup>27</sup> Finally, Miles Coverdale travelled to Antwerp, where he completed Tyndale's work while Tyndale himself was imprisoned in Vilvoorde awaiting trial and execution as a heretic. It was almost certainly Martin Lempereur who brought out the Coverdale Bible of 1535, previously attributed to Swiss or German printers.<sup>28</sup> Coverdale followed Tyndale closely in the New

<sup>26</sup> See Andrew Hope's contributions in *Tyndale's Testament* (note 5) 35–38, 151–153.

<sup>27</sup> *Tyndale's Testament* (note 5) 138, 141.

<sup>28</sup> Latré G., "The 1535 Coverdale Bible and Its Antwerp Origins", in *The Bible as Book. The Reformation*, ed. Orlaith O'Sullivan, The Bible as Book 3 (London: 2000) 89–102; also the essays by G. Latré and A. Hope in *Tyndale's Testament* (note 5) 11–23, 39–54, and references there.

Testament and Pentateuch. When he did introduce changes they were either to improve the rhythm of the text or to bring it closer to the Vulgate, Tyndale sometimes needlessly diverging from the traditional Latin readings in his attempt to provide a 'pure' translation of the Greek.

The English translators Tyndale, Joye and Coverdale, graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, are the only ones who can be placed in Antwerp with any certainty. Lefèvre was in Strasbourg, the Dutch translators (with minor exceptions) are entirely anonymous. Close by, at least, was Christiern Pedersen. He, like Lefèvre a Paris MA, was royal chaplain to Christian II of Denmark, a brother-in-law of Charles V who was then living in exile in Lier, near Antwerp. Both Pedersen and his king were Lutherans, but the authorities winked at this for dynastic reasons, at least as long as they were not too obvious about it. While in exile in the Low Countries Pedersen produced a Danish New Testament (1529, 1531) and Psalter (1531), and a few Danish pamphlets either inspired by or translated from the writings of Luther. All these were printed by Willem Vorsterman.

Besides these there was an Antwerp reprint of the Italian New Testament of Antonio Brucioli (first printed in Venice), and the publication of the Spanish New Testament of Francisco de Enzinas in 1543. Brucioli's exact position on the Lutheran-Erasmian-Lefévrian spectrum of evangelicalism is unclear, although his translations were certainly favoured by Italian Protestants, but Enzinas was undoubtedly a Lutheran.

### *Conservative Dutch Revisions*

For five years the market in Dutch biblical translations was dominated by Lutheran versions, generally with Erasmian elements. A few distinctly Erasmian versions failed to catch on to anything like the same extent but seem to have occupied a market niche of their own. The response of the authorities was to ban specific translations and heretical notes, but the option of vernacular translation was never shut down. From 1527 there were attempts to adopt the modern translations to a more conservative evangelicalism.

In that year Michiel Hillen van Hoochstraten brought out a New Testament based on an Erasmian version (probably the 1524 Delft edition). Hillen's corrector or correctors systematically brought this

version into line with the Vulgate, ‘the old Translation, which Holy Church has used until now in proclaiming the word of God and in the Office of the Mass, which is also attributed to St Jerome, with great diligence again seen through and improved by learned Lords and men’.<sup>29</sup> Hillen’s Dutch New Testament went into second and third editions in 1530 and 1531.

In 1528 Willem Vorsterman printed a complete Dutch bible in competition with Liesvelt.<sup>30</sup> His title was:

The Bible. The whole Old and New Testament corrected with great diligence according to the Latin text, and in the margin of the book the alteration of the Hebrew variants, according to the Hebrew verity for the books that are in Hebrew, and the Greek the books that are in Greek, and the content set before the chapters, Printed with fair figures, and again diligently overseen.<sup>31</sup>

The Vulgate was taken as the normative version, but this was far from being an old-fashioned edition for those nostalgic for *Den Bibel int Corte*, or even a new translation from the Vulgate. It was, rather, a revision of at least two existing Lutheran versions to bring them into line with the text of the Vulgate and with more traditional translation options. Vorsterman’s anonymous correctors did not ignore the latest developments in biblical scholarship: the edition of the Vulgate taken as normative was that of the Complutensian Polyglot, a work produced in Alcalá de Henares under the patronage of Cardinal Ximénez, whose shield appeared in a corner of Vorsterman’s frontispiece.<sup>32</sup> Marginal notes indicated textual variants from the Hebrew and the Greek. Vorsterman had every reason to draw attention to his ‘fair figures’, for this was the most amply and finely illustrated bible on the market.

<sup>29</sup> ‘nae der ouder Translatien, de welcke de heylyghe kercke tot noch toe gebruyct heeft inder vercondinghe des woorts gods ende int Offici vander Missen, diemen oeck toeschrijft sinte Hieronymo met groter naersticheyt anderwerf doersien ende ghebetert by gheleerde Heeren ende mannen’, title page.

<sup>30</sup> Augustijn C., “De Vorstermanbijbel van 1528”, *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 56 (1975–1976) 78–94.

<sup>31</sup> *Den Bibel. Tgeheele Oude ende Nieuwe Testament met grooter naersticheyt naden Latijnschen text gecorrigeert, en[de] opten cant des boecks die alteratie die hebreusche veranderinge, naerder hebreuscher waerheyt der boecke[n] die int hebreus zijn, en[de] die griecse der boecke[n] die int griecs zijn, en[de] dinhout voor die capitelen gestelt, Met schoonen figueren ghedruct, en[de] naerstelijc weder oversien.*

<sup>32</sup> *Tyndale’s Testament* (note 5) 84–86, ill. 5.

In 1528 or 1529 the Vorsterman Bible was reprinted (but with the original publication date), and again in 1531 and 1532. With each new printing yet more typically Lutheran translation options or phrases deviating from the Vulgate were removed. Curiously, the 1534 Vorsterman Bible ignored this slow process of filtration, being a straight reprint of the 1528 edition.

*Franciscus Titelmans and Traditionalist Scriptural Piety*

It is tempting to link this last phenomenon with the Observant Franciscans Thomas van Herentals, a popular preacher in Flanders who died in 1530, and Franciscus Titelmans of Hasselt, a lecturer on Scripture at Louvain who moved to Italy to join the Capuchins in 1535.<sup>33</sup> It was Titelmans who edited Van Herentals's work for posthumous publication. While his opposition to humanist textual criticism brought him into conflict with Erasmus,<sup>34</sup> his textual conservatism was matched by pastoral concerns which can only be characterized as evangelical: his works of vernacular instruction contain numerous precise biblical references, mostly to the Gospels, Paul's Epistles and the Psalms, encouraging lay readers to turn to the scriptural wellsprings of Catholic teachings and practices. This aspect of his writing is nowhere mentioned in the literature. It is suggestive that the first and fullest Vorsterman prologue, that of the 1528 'Correctors', gives conservative guidance on a scattering of peripheral issues which Franciscus Titelmans had addressed or was in the process of addressing in his scholarly Latin writings: the identity of John the Evangelist with the John of Apocalypse, Paul's authorship of Hebrews, Jerome's authorship of the Vulgate, the unreliability of the Jewish canon, the doctrinal insignificance of textual variants, Canticle as a dialogue between Christ and the Church.

At the same time, the giving of Cardinal Ximénez's titles in full and the reference to the Immaculate Virgin Mary suggest a specifically Franciscan writer. Other Franciscans were active in producing scriptural, even Lutheran works, including Johan Pelt in Amsterdam and

<sup>33</sup> Troeyer B. de, *Bio-bibliographia Franciscana Neerlandica saeculi XVI* (Nieuwkoop: 1969–1970) I, 47–50, 87–100; II, 124–125; *Tyndale's Testament* (note 5) 129–130.

<sup>34</sup> See e.g. Rummel E., *Erasmus and his Catholic Critics. II.1523–1536*, *Bibliotheca Humanistica et Reformatorica* 45 (Nieuwkoop: 1989).

Hinne Rode in Utrecht, but the Vorsterman correctors speak explicitly of ‘onse Brabantsche tale’ in opposition to the ‘Vlaems, Gulics, Cleefs, Gelders, etcetera’ of the models they were revising. The ‘Gelders’ probably refers to the prophetic books, where the translation used was by the Lutheran Gerard Geldenhouwer of Nijmegen, who was in Antwerp in the summer of 1527.<sup>35</sup>

There are touches in the Vorsterman prologues which are at odds with Titelmans’s concerns, but then there was more than one corrector among the ‘learned men’ engaged to work on the edition. That the prologues contain many verbal echoes (and straightforward translations) of Luther’s prologues, but always of phrases not in conflict with Catholic teachings, is more easily explained as the same strategy of co-optation practised by several of Luther’s less traditionalist Catholic critics in Germany and Denmark, rather than as a half-hearted attempt at Lutheranism within the law. This should be stressed, as there is a tendency in the older historiography to conflate tentative Lutheranism with what (for want of a better term) I have called traditionalist scriptural piety.

### *Translations of Scandal*

Repeated reference has been made to Lutheran translation options, and to Erasmian and more conservative versions, but specific detail would be useful. The main characteristic of Luther’s translation, and of the translations following Luther’s lead, is a determination to translate as colloquially as possible, always preferring a word which would be familiar to a contemporary native speaker except when it had acquired established theological connotations (as had priest, charity, scandal, and many others), in which case an alienating etymological translation was preferred (such as elder, love, offence, etc.). Conservative translations showed an opposite position, preferring more literal faithfulness to the Vulgate and retaining the latinate theological terms which sermons had made familiar. Erasmian translations aimed for an exact rendering of Erasmus’s Latin, which to some extent used

---

<sup>35</sup> Bruin C.C. de, *De Statenbijbel en zijn voorgangers. Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen vanaf de Reformatie tot 1637*, ed. F.G.M. Broeyer (Haarlem-Brussels: 1993) 111–120; Augustijn, “Vorstermanbijbel” (note 30).

the same sort of alienating etymologizing as did Lutheran translations but without the same concern for finding equivalents in contemporary daily life.

Some of the differences can be illustrated with the single verse Matthew 17:27, which in the King James Version runs:

Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

This sentence contains two words which vary in significant ways in different translations, as rendered here ‘we should offend’ and ‘a piece of money’, in Greek *σκανδαλίσωμεν* (*skandalisômen*) and *στατήρα* (*statéra*), in the Vulgate’s Latin *scandalizemus* and *statera*. The Greek root *skandalon* literally meant ‘offense, downfall or a stumbling against something’. It had been glossed by St Jerome in his comments on Matthew 15 as ‘by word or deed, [to] occasion another’s spiritual downfall,’ and on this basis had acquired technical theological definition in the Middle Ages. It was one of the words about which people could be sensitive. In 1542 the Convocation of the Clergy of England was presented with a list of words to be treated with particular care in future biblical translations, and ‘scandalum’ was one of them. A *statera* has no such theological connotations. It means simply a shekel, and the word occurs only this once in the New Testament (although in the Old Testament it is a unit both of currency and of weight).

The 1487 *Tboeck vanden leven ons heeren ihesu*, an adaptation of Ludolph of Saxony’s *Vita Christi*, could give ‘scandeleren of vercamen’ (scandalize or anger) and ‘enen penninc genoemt een stateer’ (a coin called a stater), but that was a text unencumbered by the claim of being a direct translation. Jan van Ghelen’s Erasmian edition of 1525 opted for ‘schandalisaci’ and ‘stateren’, giving the marginal explanation of scandalization as ‘when somebody is made worse [*verargert*] by another’s word or deed’, and of stater as ‘money called thus’.<sup>36</sup> It is noteworthy that ‘schandalisaci’ is a noun, while the Greek (and the Vulgate) have the verb ‘to scandalize’: here the Dutch translator is sticking closely to Erasmus, who had rendered the Greek verb with a classical Latin noun (*offendiculum*, coined by Pliny) rather than use Jerome’s late-antique neologism. The following year, in an

---

<sup>36</sup> ‘als hem yemant verargert door een anders woort oft werck’, ‘gelt so genoemt’.

edition heavily influenced by Lutheran versions, 'schandalisaci' was replaced with 'argernisse' (offense) and 'stateren' with 'penninck' (a coin), moving the explanation from the margin into the text itself without otherwise changing the grammar of the sentence. This is just one of many examples of interaction between text and paratext.

Michiel Hillen's more conservative editions of the New Testament also gave 'schandalisaci' and 'stateren', glossing neither. Lefèvre's French and Brucioli's Italian similarly kept both *scandalizans/scandaleziamo* and *stater*. The 1534 revised edition of Lefèvre's translation provided a marginal gloss of *scandalizans*: 'Scandale est la ou la foy est offensee, comme ibid. 18.a. de rompre lunion commune, ou de non ayder a lindigent, ou exciter autre tumulte, comme icy & Ezechiel. 44.d.' So at least two translations in the biblical humanist tradition show a greater concern to make the meaning of such terms plain, although the definition given does not differ substantially from that which Scholastic theologians derived from Jerome. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, defined scandal as 'something less rightly done or said, that occasions another's spiritual downfall'.

Lutheran translations, such as the English New Testaments and the 1526 Liesvelt Bible, went for 'offend' (in Dutch 'argeren') rather than 'scandalize', avoiding the familiar theological term in order to alienate the reader from traditional interpretations. Luther's initial choice of *argern* may also have arisen from taking Erasmus's rather literary and obscure *offendiculum* in its more common sense as a cognate of *offensio*. Contrarily, a contemporary monetary equivalent was given for the shekel, colloquially domesticating the foreign term of daily life. Luther himself opted for a *Zweigroschenstück*, the Dutch Lutheran versions for a half guilder (*eenen halven gulden*), and Tyndale initially 'a pece of twelve pens' (1526) and later 'a pece of twentie pence' (1534). Christiern Pedersen (1529) also followed Luther's lead in providing an alternative to 'scandal', in his case 'fortørne', but the stater he left more open as simply a silver coin, 'en sølff penning'. Some variation in the Dutch Lutheran versions is apparent between the use of 'not to offend' (*niet en argheren*), for instance in the 1526 Liesvelt Bible, and the use of 'not to be an offence' (*gheen argemisse en zijn*), as in Christoffel van Ruremund's 1526 New Testament, among others. The former followed Luther (and the Vulgate) in translating the Greek verb with a verb (*argern, scandalizemus*); the latter adopted Luther's lexical solution and Erasmus's grammatical shift, replacing the verb with 'to be' + a noun.

Perhaps most interesting is the Vorsterman Bible. In 1528 the correctors allowed ‘argernissen’ and ‘eenen halven gulden’ to stand, as in the Lutheran version they were revising (probably Christoffel van Ruremund’s 1526 New Testament). By 1531 the sensitivity of scandal had sunk in, and ‘argernissen . . . zijn’ was changed to ‘scandalizeren’, eliminating both the Lutheran lexical option and the Erasmian grammatical change. This was the most literal rendering of ‘scandalizemus’ of any Dutch translation of the period. The theologically insignificant ‘eenen halven gulden’ remained in all of Vorsterman’s editions. After all, the theology and not the philology was what disturbed Luther’s Catholic opponents.

A third word in the verse also shows some interesting variation: the English versions printed in Antwerp all have ‘angle’ (following Luther’s *angel*), but Coverdale opted for ‘hook’ in his English-Vulgate parallel-text edition. This was a version printed in London in 1538 to allay conservative fears about the Scriptures in English by showing how little difference there was with the Latin. In the same place, he used ‘staterē’ with the marginal gloss, ‘a certayne pece of money of value aboute xx. pens’, but kept ‘offende’. A difference in orthography distinguishes the Dutch Lutheran versions from more conservative revisions: the former have ‘ang(h)el’, the latter ‘hang(h)el’. Even in such a straightforward case, with neither theological connotations at issue nor a question of domestic or exotic translation options, there seems to be a deliberate convergence to or divergence from Luther’s German.<sup>37</sup>

Another word with neither theological implications nor exotic strangeness is the Greek *χλωρός* (*chlōrós*, meaning ‘green’ or ‘deathly pale’), the colour of the horse ridden by Death in Apocalypse 6:8. This too appears in different forms in different translations. Among the Dutch New Testament translations, Van Ghelen’s 1525 Erasmian version has ‘green’ (*groen*, a rendering influenced by early editions of Erasmus’s annotations on the New Testament, which glossed *χλωρός* as *viridis*); Michiel Hillen’s 1527 version has ‘pale’ (*bleeck*), following the Vulgate’s *pallidus*; and other translations (Lutheran versions, or the revision of them by the Vorsterman correctors) have the naturalistic

---

<sup>37</sup> I am grateful to Catharina Peersman for drawing my attention to this point after a Translation Studies seminar in the K.U. Leuven run by José Lambert and Reine Meylaerts.

‘dun’ (*vael*), following Luther’s *falb*.<sup>38</sup> Although both Tyndale and Coverdale were, in a broad sense, Lutherans, neither followed Luther’s lead in this instance. Tyndale opted for ‘green’, which Coverdale altered to ‘pale’.<sup>39</sup>

### *Antwerp’s Three-Way Junction*

That the three different types of biblical translation, based on different principles, appealed to different markets is made clearer by linking them with the wider print culture. Early Lutheran tracts such as the *Oeconomica christiana* (a Low Countries Latin work which was the basis for the *Summa der Godliker Schrifturen*, but also for English, French and Italian translations); Erasmian writings such as the *Enchiridion militis christiani* (also widely translated, and available in two different Dutch editions from 1523); and more traditional vernacular works for the instruction of the laity, such as Thomas van Herentals’s *Den Spiegel des kersten levens* (1532) or Franciscus Titelmans’s *Den Schat des Christen Gheloofs* (1529): all these make reference to the Bible as a source of doctrinal and moral principles, but readers of each would by choice consult a different vernacular version from those preferred by the others. No hard and fast line can be drawn, for the age of confessions and catechisms was just beginning, but broad tendencies and antagonisms are clear.

The distinct development and mutual influences of the three strands are marked in the 1520s and 1530s, but thereafter they seem to diverge more sharply. Even within this period, the time-scale is not identical. Lutheranism is the dominant strand throughout, Erasmianism is most marked in the mid-1520s, while more conservative evangelicalism comes to the fore in the years 1527–1534 and then fades into the background (re-emerging in the mid-1540s). This seems to indicate that Catholic reformers keen not to let Lutherans ‘steal’ the Bible took the initiative, but then abandoned the struggle either by

<sup>38</sup> Tyndale’s *Testament* (note 5) 100–102.

<sup>39</sup> Tyndale’s unusual choice of ‘green’, as well as his following of Luther when translating *kokkinos* (*coccinus*) variously as ‘rose’, ‘scarlet’ or ‘purple’, was first drawn to scholarly attention by Popp M., “The Green Horse or Was Tyndale’s Bible Translation an Independent Humanistic Achievement?”, *Anglistentag 1998 Erfurt. Proceedings*, ed. F.-W. Neumann – S. Schülting (Trier: 1999) 137–157.

going over to Lutheranism or by bending to more conservative pressure to move the emphasis away from lay bible-reading. Certainly, whoever had been keeping an eye on the Vorsterman Bibles of 1528–1532 was absent or winking in 1534, when the slow process of revision was undone.

After 1535 Antwerp's dominance in the production of vernacular bibles for a European market declined dramatically, and it was effectively ended in 1545. A number of factors were important—a hardening of attitudes to heresy after the Anabaptist scare of 1535, the change in religious policy in England and Denmark, the printing of more radically Protestant French bibles in Switzerland—but most important was the intervention of state power. The increasingly hard line of Charles V's heresy edicts towards unlicensed printing simply forced all but a few authorized Catholic versions out of production.

Despite the differences between them, almost all the editions of the Bible and of the New Testament used the same or very similar woodcuts, showing a shared visual culture and a lack of Protestant scruples about portraying the divine.<sup>40</sup> It is also clear in the case of the Dutch New Testaments that Erasmian, Lutheran and more conservative ideas about the basic text and about the practice and function of translation interacted to produce versions which might tend more to one particular position but were influenced by others. Thus Jan van Ghelen's 1526 New Testament was an Erasmian version with Lutheran influences, Christoffel van Ruremund's 1526 New Testament was a Lutheran version with Erasmian influences, Michiel Hillen's 1527 New Testament was a Vulgate version based on an Erasmian one, and the New Testament in the 1528 Vorsterman Bible was a revision of Christoffel van Ruremund's Lutheran-Erasmian version to bring it into line with the Vulgate. Other combinations were possible, and examples could be multiplied. Even in the case of the English Lutherans, the work of George Joye and Miles Coverdale in the mid-1530s shows a re-appreciation of the Vulgate after Tyndale's rejection of it. This was perhaps in the light of the Vulgate editions and translations emanating from French evangelical circles and printed in Antwerp by their own publisher, Martin Lempereur. One house in Antwerp, at least, could certainly have been a crossroads of emerging religious traditions.

---

<sup>40</sup> *Tyndale's Testament* (note 5) 125–128.

*Selective Bibliography*

- ARBLASTER P. – JUHÁSZ G. – LATRÉ G. (eds.), *Tyndale's Testament*, exhibition catalogue (Turnhout: 2002).
- AUGUSTIJN C., "De Vorstermanbijbel van 1528", *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 56 (1975–1976) 78–94.
- BOULDING M.C., "Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, c. 1460–1536", in *Opening the Scrolls*, ed. D.A. Bellenger (Bath: 1987) 27–49.
- BRUIN C.C. DE, *De Statenbijbel en zijn voorgangers. Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen vanaf de Reformatie tot 1637*, ed. F.G.M. Broeyer (Haarlem—Brussels: 1993) 111–120.
- FRANÇOIS W., "De Leuvense theologen en de eerste gedrukte bijbels in de volkstaal (1522–1533). Een feitelijk gedoogbeleid?", *Trajecta* 11 (2002) 244–276.
- GÉNARD P., "Personnes poursuivies judiciairement à Anvers, au XVI<sup>e</sup>, pour le 'faict de religion'—Liste et pièces officielles à l'appui", *Antwerpsch Archievenblad* 7 (n.d.) 114–472.
- GILMONT J.F. (ed.), *The Reformation and the Book*, ed. and transl. Karin Maag, St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History (Aldershot: 1998).
- GREENSLADE S.L., *The Cambridge History of the Bible. The West from the Reformation to the Present Day* (Cambridge: 1963).
- HOLLANDER A.A. DEN, *De Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen 1522–1545*, *Bibliotheca bibliographica Neerlandica* 33 (Nieuwkoop: 1997), English summary 513–519.
- , "'Dat oude ende dat nieuwe testament' (1526). Jacob van Liesvelt en de nieuwe markt voor bijbels in de zestiende eeuw", *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis* 6 (1999) 105–122.
- , "Forbidden Bibles. Paratext and the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. Why Dutch Bibles were placed on the 1546 Louvain Index" in *Paratext and Megatext as Channels of Jewish and Christian Traditions. The Textual Markers of Contextualization*, eds. August den Hollander – Ulrich Schmidt – Willem Smelik, Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series (Leiden: 2003) 152–175.
- LATRÉ G., "The 1535 Coverdale Bible and Its Antwerp Origins", in *The Bible as Book. The Reformation*, ed. Orlaith O'Sullivan, The Bible as Book 3 (London: 2000) 89–102.
- MOREAU E. DE, *Histoire de l'Eglise en Belgique*, vol. 4, Museum Lessianum, Section historique 12 (Brussels: 1949).
- POPP M., "The Green Horse or Was Tyndale's Bible Translation an Independent Humanistic Achievement?", *Anglistentag 1998 Erfurt. Proceedings*, ed. F.-W. Neumann – S. Schülting (Trier: 1999) 137–157.
- PRIMS F., *Geschiedenis van Antwerpen*, vol. 7 pt 1 (Brussels: 1938).
- RAMSAY G.D., *The City of London in International Politics at the Accession of Elizabeth Tudor* (Manchester: 1975).
- RUMMEL E., *Erasmus and his Catholic Critics. II.1523–1536*, *Bibliotheca Humanistica et Reformatorica* 45 (Nieuwkoop: 1989).
- SKINNER Q., *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 1 The Renaissance (Cambridge: 1978).
- TRAPMAN J., *De Summa der Godliker Scrijturen (1523)* (Leiden: 1978).
- TROEYER B. DE, *Bio-bibliographia Franciscana Neerlandica saeculi XVI*, 2 vols (Nieuwkoop: 1969–1970).
- F.G.V., *Antwerpsch Chronyckje, in het welk zeer veele en elders te vergeefs gezogte geschiedenissen, sedert den Jare 1500. tot het Jaar 1574*, anonymously edited (Leiden: 1743).



## PROTESTANT CONVERSIONS IN AN AGE OF CATHOLIC REFORMATION: THE CASE OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ANTWERP

Guido Marnef

It is no exaggeration to say that Antwerp was the big center of cultural and religious intertraffic in the sixteenth-century Low Countries. As one of the great centers of world trade, Antwerp was exceptionally open to new ideas. In his *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi* (1567), the Florentine Lodovico Guicciardini emphasized the cosmopolitan character of the Antwerp metropolis. He wrote that 'it was a wonderful thing, to see such a great coming together of so many people and nations', adding 'that at Antwerp, since there is always such a mass of strangers, there are always new tidings from all over the world'.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that Antwerp was affected by the process of religious renewal to a degree matched by few other cities in the Netherlands. This commercial metropolis became an important center of Protestantism, harboring Anabaptist, Lutheran, and Calvinist communities. From the 1560s onwards, the respective positions of the Catholic and Protestant Churches were to a great extent determined by the prevailing political constellation. The Dutch Revolt in particular created new opportunities for the competing confessions. During the so-called Wonderyear or *annus mirabilis* (April 1566–April 1567), Calvinists and Lutherans in Antwerp were free to organize for the first time and experienced a strong, but short-lived expansion. The next years of harsh repression under the Duke of Alva drove the Protestant movement entirely underground.<sup>2</sup> From 1577 onwards, the Calvinists gradually attained power, installing a "Calvinist Republic" and proscribing observance of the Catholic religion.<sup>3</sup> In 1585, the Spanish Governor-General Alexander Farnese

---

<sup>1</sup> Guicciardini L., *Beschrijvinghe van alle de Nederlanden; anderssins ghenoeemt Neder-Duytschlandt* (Amsterdam: 1612) 88–93.

<sup>2</sup> See Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis 1550–1577* (Baltimore-London: 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Marnef G., "Brabants calvinisme in opmars: de weg naar de calvinistische

succeeded in bringing the rebellious city to heel. Henceforth, Antwerp was the bulwark of Catholic Reformation and a frontier city from which the Protestant North was combated.<sup>4</sup>

The wavering between Catholic and Protestant allegiances was enhanced by the existence of broad but heterogeneous religious groups somewhere “in between”. These groups included people who stood between orthodox Catholicism, soon to be characterized by the Council of Trent, and Calvinism, Lutheranism or Anabaptism. A considerable number of them may be called “Protestantizing Catholics”, people who could no longer accept a number of practices or articles of faith of the Catholic Church and found some points in common with the Protestant reformers, but who could not—or not yet—bring themselves to accept an open breach with the established Church. However, the changing political situation could drive them to one of the two extremes, which is what happened during the Wonderyear when thousands attended the sermons of the Calvinists and the Lutherans.<sup>5</sup>

In this paper, I shall focus on a specific form of “intertraffic of the mind”: the large-scale conversions and reconciliations which were closely connected to the mobility of the religious landscape in sixteenth-century Antwerp. There were in fact two periods during which Catholics tried to carry out large-scale conversions after a phase of Protestant ascendancy: the first during the reign of the Duke of Alva and the second in the years following the capitulation of Antwerp in 1585. The Catholic strategies and the Protestant responses will undoubtedly reveal a lot about the nature of religious allegiance and mobility in an age of growing confessionalization.<sup>6</sup>

---

republieken te Antwerpen, Brussel en Mechelen, 1577–1580” *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 70 (1987) 7–21.

<sup>4</sup> Marinus M.J., *De contrareformatie te Antwerpen (1585–1676). Kerkelijk leven in een grootstad* (Brussels: 1995).

<sup>5</sup> Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age* (note 2) 56–58, 88; Woltjer J.J., *Tussen vrijheidsstrijd en burgeroorlog. Over de Nederlandse Opstand 1555–1580* (Amsterdam: 1994) 14–17, 96–100.

<sup>6</sup> See for the confessionalization process Schilling H., “Confessional Europe”, in Th.A. Brady – H.A. Oberman – J.D. Tracy (eds.), *Handbook of European History 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, 2 vols. (Leiden: 1995), vol. II, 641–681.

*A general pardon under the Duke of Alva*

As Governor-General of the Netherlands the Duke of Alva aimed at crushing both rebellion and Protestantism. At the same time, he did his best to reshape religious life on the Tridentine reform model.<sup>7</sup> The appointment of a bishop to the still vacant see of Antwerp in 1570 was due to Alva's personal intervention.<sup>8</sup> The measures to strengthen the Catholic faith also included the central government's efforts to bring lapsed Catholics back to the Church by proclaiming a general pardon. The royal pardon was accompanied by a papal pardon: the first forgave acts of rebellion against royal power; the second, disobedience to or separation from the Catholic Church. The Pardon was proclaimed, with due pomp, on 16 July 1570 at Antwerp.<sup>9</sup>

The papal Pardon had some success in the ecclesiastical province of Mechelen. In the diocese of Antwerp, 17,852 persons reconciled themselves, 14,128 in Antwerp alone.<sup>10</sup> In the archbishopric of Mechelen 10,906 and in the bishopric of 's-Hertogenbosch approximately 6,000 persons were reconciled.<sup>11</sup> A network of apostolic delegates and subdelegates was active in each diocese to organize the reconciliation process.<sup>12</sup> We have no information about the identity and the nature of the Antwerp *reconciliati*, but the situation in the city was certainly not different from that in Mechelen and 's-Hertogenbosch. Maximilian Morillon, Vicar-General of Mechelen,

<sup>7</sup> See on Alva's policy in the Netherlands Janssens G., "*Brabant in het Verweer*". *Loyale oppositie tegen Spanje's bewind in de Nederlanden van Alva tot Farnese 1567–1578* (Kortrijk: 1989) ch. 2; Maltby W.S., *Alba: A Biography of Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba 1507–1587* (Berkeley: 1983) *passim*.

<sup>8</sup> Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age* (note 2) 124–25. Since the new bishoprics scheme of 1559 Antwerp had been the see of a new diocese. The Antwerp city government opposed the installation of a bishop and Philip Nigri, the bishop-designate, died without having been able to take possession of his episcopal seat.

<sup>9</sup> Janssens G., "*Brabant in het Verweer*" (note 7) 164–67. The text of the Pardon is in Bor P.C., *Oorsprong, begin, en vervolgh der Nederlandsche oorlogen, beroerten en burgerlyke oneenigheden*, 4 vols (Amsterdam: 1679), vol. I, 319–21.

<sup>10</sup> See the list, probably from the Bishop of Antwerp, November 1570, in Algemeen Rijksarchief Brussels, *Papieren van Staat en Audiëntie*, 271, fol. 257r<sup>o</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. reports by Vicar-General Maximilian Morillon, 10 November 1570, and bishop Laurentius Metsius, 29 November 1570, in Algemeen Rijksarchief Brussels, *Papieren van Staat en Audiëntie*, 271, fols. 255r–256v.

<sup>12</sup> See the instructions for the papal delegates and subdelegates, and the *forma abjuratonis*, the *forma absolutiois*, and the *forma literarum testimonialium*, in Archief Aartsbisdom Mechelen, *Mechliniensia*, 1, fol. 161, and *Fonds de Coriache*, reg. 1, fols. 125r–126r, 129.

and Laurentius Metsius, Bishop of 's-Hertogenbosch, declared that very few of those reconciled had really been infected by heresy. Most of them, driven by curiosity or a taste for adventure, had let themselves be tempted to attend a forbidden preaching once or twice or to enter a Protestant church. Because they had later felt remorse, they now wanted to have a written confirmation of their reconciliation with the Catholic Church in order to avoid subsequent difficulties. The stubborn heretics, on the other hand, had already left the country.<sup>13</sup> Joachim Hopperus made a similar statement when he wrote to Philip II that a multitude of people had been reconciled. Yet only a minority had really been affected by heresy. The large majority had merely read—out of curiosity—a forbidden book or attended a heretic preaching.<sup>14</sup>

The number of Antwerp *reconciliati*, 14,128, represents a considerable part of the city's adult population and must be seen in light of the broad religious middle groups which wavered under the influence of changing political circumstances.<sup>15</sup> Alva's repression and the rebels' lack of notable success undoubtedly persuaded many with Protestant sympathies to reconcile themselves to the dominant Catholic Church. Yet, one may doubt the lasting effect of the large-scale reconciliation process. Those who wanted to reconcile themselves with the Catholic Church had to abjure their heretical errors,<sup>16</sup> but there was no concerted reform program to strengthen the *reconciliati* in their faith. Alva's successor, Don Luis de Requesens, often complained that the local clergy and the civic authorities failed to conduct a policy of active pastoral care.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, Alva's policy of repression created a climate of disaffection with the Spanish king.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See note 11.

<sup>14</sup> Letter of 17 February 1571, in Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Brussels, Ms. 16,090, fol. 36v. Hopperus was Keeper of the Seals for Netherlandish affairs at the Spanish court.

<sup>15</sup> In 1570, Antwerp counted c. 90,000 permanent inhabitants. Van Roey J., "De bevolking", in *Antwerpen in de XVIde eeuw* (Antwerp: 1975) 97.

<sup>16</sup> See the *forma abjuratonis* mentioned in note 12.

<sup>17</sup> Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age* (note 2) 130–32. See also Marnef G., "Een kanunnik in troebele tijden. Franciscus Doncker, voorman van de contrareformatorische actie te Antwerpen (1566–1573)", in E. Put – M.J. Marinus – H. Storme (eds.), *Geloven in het verleden. Studies over het godsdienstig leven in de vroegmoderne tijd, aangeboden aan Michel Cloet* (Leuven 1996) 327–38.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, the report of the Jesuit Franciscus Costerus to Vicar-General Polanco [no date, 1573], analyzed in Poncelet A., *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus*

*Large-scale conversions after the reconquista by Farnese*

Fifteen years later, when Alexander Farnese launched a Tridentine reform program, the situation was completely different. On 17 August 1585, the Calvinist city fathers of Antwerp surrendered to Farnese after a long and exhausting siege.<sup>19</sup> Particularly important for the Protestants was article six of the capitulation treaty which stipulated that the Protestants would be allowed to stay in the city for another four years, if they were at least prepared 'to live peacefully, without disorder and scandal'. At the end of this period, they would have to convert to Catholicism or leave the city.<sup>20</sup> The Protestants were disappointed about this limited freedom of conscience. Farnese, on the contrary, believed in the intrinsic power of the Counter-Reformation and hoped to convert a significant number of Protestants within the four-year reconciliation period. He expected a lot in this regard from the new religious orders, especially from the Jesuits and the Capuchins.<sup>21</sup> Laevinus Torrentius, the second Bishop of Antwerp, had similar expectations.<sup>22</sup>

In passing, it should be noticed that in fact there were many potential converts in the city. When the Calvinist Republic came to an end, the Antwerp citizen guard—consisting of 10,788 adult men—numbered 45 percent Catholics, 26 percent Calvinists, 15 percent Lutherans, and 2 percent Anabaptists. The religious affiliation of about 12 percent was not known, if such existed.<sup>23</sup> This means that

---

*dans les anciens Pays-Bas*, 2 vols. (Brussels: 1926–29), I, 262–64, and Andriessen J., *De Jezuïeten en het samenhorigheidsbesef der Nederlanden 1585–1648* (Antwerp: 1957) 5–6.

<sup>19</sup> For the circumstances, see Marnix G., "Burgemeester in moeilijke tijden: Marnix en het beleg van Antwerpen", in H. Duits – T. van Strien (eds.), *Een intellectuele activist. Studies over leven en werk van Philips van Marnix van Sint Aldegonde* (Amsterdam: 2001) 28–36.

<sup>20</sup> Gachard L.P. (ed.), "Analectes historiques", *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'Histoire* 12 (1871) 289–90.

<sup>21</sup> Van der Essen L., "Enige dokumenten betreffende de betrekkingen tussen Parma en de Jesuïeten (1584–1590)", in *Huldeboek Pater Dr. Bonaventura Kruitwagen O.F.M.* (The Hague: 1949) 138–43; Idem, "Alexandre Farnèse homme d'état chrétien", in *Miscellanea Vermeersch*, 2 vols. (Rome: 1935), vol. II, 77–79; Hildebrand P., *De kapucijnen in de Nederlanden en het prinsbisdom Luik*, 9 vols. (Antwerp: 1945–55), vol. I, 32–38, 42–44.

<sup>22</sup> Marinus M.J., *Laevinus Torrentius als tweede bisschop van Antwerpen (1587–1595)* (Brussels: 1989), 139–41, 161–62.

<sup>23</sup> Boumans R., "De getalsterkte van katholieken en protestanten te Antwerpen in 1585", *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis* 30 (1952) 741–98.

there were probably 21,000 Calvinists, 12,000 Lutherans, and 1,600 Anabaptists, if one accepts an overall population figure of 82,000.

The Society of Jesus took the lead in the Counter-Reformation activities. Through preaching, education, catechism schools, and the printed word, the Jesuits tried to strengthen the faith of Catholics and bring heretics back to the fold of the Holy Church. As elsewhere, the Jesuit Marian congregation, or sodality, played a significant role in this process of renewal and conversion.<sup>24</sup> On 8 December 1585—the feast of the Immaculate Conception—Father Franciscus Costerus, who headed the Netherlandish province and resided in Antwerp,<sup>25</sup> convoked the first meeting of the sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Among the first members were two canons of the chapter of Our Lady, two city fathers and a number of rich merchants.<sup>26</sup> This coalition of the ecclesiastical, political, and economic elite became one of the Jesuits' hallmarks.<sup>27</sup> The sodality of the Virgin Mary experienced a rapid growth in Antwerp, the number of enrolled members increasing from 70 in 1585 to 761 in 1609.<sup>28</sup>

From the very beginning, the Jesuit sodality was in the vanguard of the conversion efforts. From Advent until Easter 1586 and 1587 the Jesuits organized daily conferences in the chapel of the sodality. Each member of the sodality was expected to bring along one Protestant. During these 'conversion sessions' Father Costerus spoke about theological issues that divided Catholics and Protestants and refuted any objections raised by the Protestants present. This approach yielded about fifty conversions.<sup>29</sup> More spectacular was the conversion of a former Calvinist minister, Jean Haren, who had been active in Antwerp.<sup>30</sup> In March 1586 Haren publicly abjured his heretical

<sup>24</sup> For the sodalities in general see Châtellier L., *L'Europe des dévots* (Paris: 1987).

<sup>25</sup> See on Costerus (1532–1619) Andriessen J., "Costerus, Franciscus", in *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*, vol. I (Brussels: 1964), 333–41.

<sup>26</sup> Van Lerius Th. (ed.), "Antwerpsch Chronykje. Uit den Boeck van de Sodaliteyt der Getrouwde, onder den titel van O.-L.-V. Boodschap der Soc. Jesu te Antwerpen", *De Vlaemsche School* 8 (1862) 122–23.

<sup>27</sup> Compare Thijs A.K.L., *Van Geuzenstad tot katholiek bolwerk. Maatschappelijke betekenis van de Kerk in contrareformatiorisch Antwerpen* (Turnhout: 1990) 81–84.

<sup>28</sup> Marinus M.J., *De Contrareformatie* (note 4) 255–57; Papebrochius D., *Annales Antverpienses ab urbe condita ad annum MDCC*, ed. F.H. Mertens – E. Buschmann, 5 vols (Antwerp: 1845–48), vol. IV, 214–16.

<sup>29</sup> Marinus M.J., *Laevinus Torrentius* (note 22) 161; Van Lerius Th., "Antwerpsch Chronykje" (note 26) 125; Hardeman R., *Franciscus Costerus (1532–1619). Een Vlaamsche apostel en volksredenaar* (Alken: 1933), 23–24.

<sup>30</sup> See for his biography Haag E. – Haag E., *La France Protestante*, 10 vols. (Paris:

faith in the sodality's house in the presence of most of the city fathers and all the members of the sodality.<sup>31</sup> This conversion was immediately exploited for propaganda purposes. Haren explained his motives in a printed justification which was published simultaneously in Dutch and French.<sup>32</sup> There are, however, no indications that the Haren case generated a vogue for new conversions.<sup>33</sup>

It may be interesting, however, to see how many Protestants converted to the Catholic Church during the four-year reconciliation period. It is worth remembering that many Protestants remained loyal to their faith and left Antwerp. The population figure displays a dramatic drop in the years following the city's capitulation, as is clear from Table 1.

*Table 1: Demographic development of Antwerp, 1585–1589<sup>34</sup>*

1585	82,000
8 May 1586	59,082
21 October 1586	48,422
1589	42,000

Within four years Antwerp's population nearly halved, beyond doubt as a result of large-scale emigration. Of course, not all emigrants were Protestants. There were Catholics who left Antwerp for economic reasons, fleeing the excessive grain prices or attracted by the higher wages in the rebellious North.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, we may assume that a substantial majority of the emigrants were Protestants.

---

1846–59), vol. V, 429–31; De Bie J.P. – Loosjes J., *Biographisch woordenboek van Protestantse godgeleerden in Nederland*, 5 vols (The Hague: n.d.), vol. III, 515–18.

<sup>31</sup> Van Lerius Th., “Antwerpsch Chronykje” (note 26) 125.

<sup>32</sup> See the titles of the two 1586 editions and of an expanded French edition published in 1587 in Cockx-Indestege E., *Belgica Typographica, 1541–1600*, 4 vols. (Nieuwkoop: 1968–94), nos 5904–05, 8457.

<sup>33</sup> See for similar observations on France Luria K.P., “The politics of Protestant conversion to Catholicism in seventeenth-century France”, in P. van der Veer (ed.), *Conversions to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity* (New York – London: 1996) 26–28. In 1610 Haren returned to his Calvinist faith.

<sup>34</sup> Van Roey J., “De bevolking” (note 15) 95–108; Boumans R., “Le dépeuplement d' Anvers dans le dernier quart du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle”, *Revue du Nord* 29 (1947) 181–94.

<sup>35</sup> Scholliers E., “De eerste schade van de scheiding. De sociaal-economische conjunctuur 1558–1609”, in J. Craeybeckx – F. Daelemans – F.G. Scheelings (eds.), “1585: op gescheiden wegen . . .” (Louvain: 1988) 42–51.

It is interesting to see how the number of conversions developed in the same period. The baptism and marriage registers of the Antwerp parishes often refer to people who reconciled themselves to the Catholic Church, using expressions such as ‘reconciliatus’, ‘contraxerunt matrimonium apud alios’, or ‘qui a calvinistis fuere’.<sup>36</sup> This additional information enables us to reconstruct the evolution of the reconciliations (see Tables 2 and 3).

*Table 2: Number of reconciliations in Antwerp baptism registers, 1586–1589*<sup>37</sup>

	1586	1587	1588	1589
Our Lady	0	12	135	676
St James	3	0	0	145
St Walburgis	0	0	17	220
St Andrew	0	0	37	3
Total	3	12	189	1044

*Table 3: Number of reconciliations in Antwerp marriage registers, 1586–1589*<sup>38</sup>

	1586	1587	1588	1589
Our Lady	1	0	17	241
St James	0	0	0	74
St Walburgis	1	0	4	85
Total	2	0	21	400

In the period in question, there were altogether 9,033 baptisms and 2,285 marriages: the proportions of these involving reconciliation were 13.8 percent and 18.5 percent respectively. These percentages are undoubtedly an under-representation. We may assume that in some cases the parish priests neglected to note the special nature of

<sup>36</sup> See for a similar practice in sixteenth-century France Rosenberg D., “Les registres paroissiaux et les incidences de la réaction à la Saint-Barthélemy à Amiens”, *Revue du Nord* 70 (1988) 501–10.

<sup>37</sup> Figures based on Hendrickx M., “Enkele cijfers in verband met de bekering van de Protestanten te Antwerpen in 1585–1589”, *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 41 (1967) 304–05. There are no data available for the Saint George parish.

<sup>38</sup> Hendrickx M., “Enkele cijfers” (note 37) 305–06. No data are available for the Saint George and the Saint Andrew parishes.

the baptisms or marriages. It is very unlikely, for instance, that there were only three reconciliation-baptisms at the Church of St Andrew in 1589. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that a large number of people who converted to the Catholic Church do not appear in the parish registers. A significant number of Protestants had been baptized or married in a Catholic parish church before they joined one of the Protestant confessions. As a consequence, they did not need a new baptism or marriage registration since the old one was still valid.

In any case, the figures in Tables 2 and 3 make it clear that the overwhelming majority of the reconciliations took place in 1589: 84 percent in the case of baptisms and as high as 94 percent in the case of marriages. Most Protestants who remained in Antwerp and considered a reconciliation waited until close to the deadline. August 1589 displays a real peak, with 495 reconciliation-baptisms and 170 reconciliation-marriages, representing respectively 66 and 79 percent of the month's registrations. Undoubtedly, many Protestants postponed their decision because they hoped to obtain an extension of the reconciliation period. They even collected money in order to "buy" such a concession from the central government. A number of city fathers did not reject the initiative for economic reasons. Eventually, the plan failed, partly due to the obstinate opposition of Bishop Torrentius.<sup>39</sup>

The fact that so many Protestants decided to reconcile as late as possible indicates that other than religious motives played a significant role. Well-to-do people who chose emigration risked losing a great deal of money when they sold their property because the house market had collapsed after the capitulation of the city.<sup>40</sup> The reconciliation vogue even continued after the deadline of August 1589 had passed. Bishop Torrentius counted 1,500 reconciliations from the end of

---

<sup>39</sup> Marinus M.J., *Laevinus Torrentius* (note 22) 162. The money collection reminds us of the Wonderyear when Calvinists and Lutherans tried to buy freedom of religion from the king. Cf. Marnef G., "The dynamics of Reformed militancy in the Low Countries: the Wonderyear", in N. Scott Amos – A. Pettegree – H. van Nierop (eds.), *The Education of a Christian Society. Humanism and the Reformation in Britain and the Netherlands* (Aldershot: 1999) 205–08.

<sup>40</sup> Scholliers E., "De lagere klassen", in *Antwerpen in de XVIde eeuw* (Antwerp: 1975) 172–73. Bishop Torrentius noticed that there were many rich people among the last-moment *reconciliati*. Marinus, *Laevinus Torrentius* (note 22) 164.

August to the end of November 1589.<sup>41</sup> This number is much higher than that of the reconciliations mentioned in the parish registers, and once again underscores the incompleteness of these sources. Of course, one may question the genuineness of eleventh-hour conversions. We may assume that some of these converts maintained Protestant sympathies, but this is difficult to prove.<sup>42</sup>

*Triumphant Catholicism and the diabolization of the heretical "other"*

After 1585 Antwerp became a frontier city not far from the rebellious and predominantly Protestant provinces in the North. The changing fortunes of war may have created a climate of incertitude among Antwerp city dwellers. In 1588, the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the failure of the siege of Bergen-op-Zoom—the only major town of the Duchy of Brabant not reconquered by Farnese—made it clear that the Spanish army was not invincible.<sup>43</sup>

It was of the utmost importance, therefore, that the civil and ecclesiastical authorities demonstrate that Antwerp would henceforth be a Catholic stronghold. This task was easier to accomplish since there was close co-operation between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities. The Jesuits, who were the champions of Counter-Reformation policy, had staunch supporters in city government circles. I have already mentioned that a number of city fathers belonged to the Jesuit sodality. Others sent their sons to the Jesuit college in Antwerp or had sons who later entered the Society of Jesus.<sup>44</sup>

That the discourse of the triumphant Catholic Church had permeated the heart of civic power became clear when an image of Our Lady was put in the forefront of the Antwerp city hall.<sup>45</sup> In

<sup>41</sup> Marinus, *Laevinus Torrentius* (note 22) 163, note 128. He mentions 300 reconciliations from 23 August to 8 September, 200 from 8 September to 28 October and 1,000 from 28 October to 29 November 1589.

<sup>42</sup> Compare Marinus M.J., "De protestanten te Antwerpen (1585–1700)", *Trajecta* 2 (1993), 328–29.

<sup>43</sup> Parker G., *The Dutch Revolt* (Harmondsworth: 1990) 221–24.

<sup>44</sup> Delée J. (ed.), "Liste d' élèves du collège des pères jésuites à Anvers (gymnasium Societatis Jesu Antverpiense). I. De 1575 à 1640", *De Schakel* 22 (1967) 2–94; Ghys I., *De Antwerpse magistraat in een laat-humanistische en contra-reformatoische periode, 1585–1621. Een institutionele, sociaal-economische en culturele analyse*, 2 vols (Unpublished M.A. thesis K.U. Leuven: 1988), vol. I, 194. Compare Po-chia Hsia R., *Society and Religion in Münster 1535–1618* (New Haven: 1984) 78–81, 102–04.

<sup>45</sup> Based on Van Lerius Th. (ed.), "Antwerpsch Chronykje" (note 26) 123–25.

1586, the Jesuit sodality of the Holy Virgin Mary requested the city government that an image of Our Lady should replace the mythical and profane Brabo in the central part of the city hall. The request was granted and the sodality started a collection. Among the contributors were most city fathers and the city's six militia companies. On 22 February 1587, the finished statue was consecrated by Father Franciscus Costerus in the presence of all the sodality members and the burgomasters and aldermen of the city. At the end of the same month, it was placed on the facade of the city hall. The apotheosis of the initiative took place on Mary Annunciation day, 7 April 1587. A solemn mass was celebrated in the Jesuit church. Subsequently, the copper crown and sceptre of the statue were consecrated in the sodality's chamber. In the afternoon, crown and sceptre were brought to the Great Market place on a triumphal car. The coronation of the statue of Our Lady was solemnized 'in all honor and triumph [...] so that the honor of the Virgin Mary was restored'. Finally, the provost of the sodality and three other orators addressed the city government. The second orator explained that the crowned Virgin Mary was the patron of the sodality. The third admonished that they never forsake the Virgin and that they 'remain loyal to the same Virgin as patron of the city as well to all eternity'.

The statue of Our Lady put on the city hall was a triumphant one.<sup>46</sup> She emphatically combated the enemies of the true faith, as happened, for instance, at the sea-battle of Lepanto.<sup>47</sup> Alexander Farnese counted on the Virgin Mary during the siege of Antwerp and attributed his victory to her assistance.<sup>48</sup> The many Antwerpers who regularly passed the Great Market place and watched the monumental city hall undoubtedly noticed the new statue; it reminded them of the completely new politico-religious constellation.

---

<sup>46</sup> For a contemporary picture of the statue of Our Lady see Figure 1, printed in Costerus F., *De cantico Salve Regina septem meditationes* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1587), A1. See also Mauquoy-Hendrickx M., *Les estampes des Wierix conservées au Cabinet des estampes de la Bibliothèque royale Albert Ier. Catalogue raisonné*, 3 vols. (Brussels: 1978–83), vol. I, 129, n° 717, and Thijs A.K.L., *Antwerpen internationaal centrum van devotieprenten 17de–18de eeuw* (Louvain: 1993) 10.

<sup>47</sup> See on the *Santa Maria della Vittoria* and the Jesuit sodalities L. Châtellier, *L'Europe des dévots* (note 24) 22–5. See for the use of the image of Our Lady in the polemic between Catholics and Protestants Schöller B., *Kölner Druckgraphik der Gegenreformation. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte religiöser Bildpropaganda zur Zeit der Glaubenskämpfe mit einem Katalog der Einblattdrucke des Verlages Johann Bussemacher* (Cologne: 1992) 46–64.

<sup>48</sup> Van der Essen L., "Alexandre Farnèse" (note 21) 79.

From 1585 onwards, the Antwerp religious leaders were obliged to fight against heretics from within and without since they lived in a frontier city involved in an ongoing war. The polemical literature which poured from the Antwerp presses shows clearly how the new Tridentine faith was colored by the rejection and even diabolization of the heretical "other". It was once again the Jesuits who played the dominant role in this campaign.<sup>49</sup> It may be true that the polemical books were produced by a small clerical elite, but they reached an audience far beyond the learned theologians. As Michael Questier put it, they 'were designed to be widely available, immediately comprehensible and were meant to tap into established forms of persuasion and argument'.<sup>50</sup> This statement applies remarkably well to the South-Netherlandish polemical works. The learned and weighty tracts published before 1585 made way for shorter books, often written in the vernacular and illustrated with engravings.<sup>51</sup>

A few Jesuits, such as the unavoidable Franciscus Costerus<sup>52</sup> and Joannes David,<sup>53</sup> came to the fore as prolific and influential authors of polemical literature. They refuted the heretics with logical arguments and biting irony. In his *Evidence of the old Catholic teaching*, Costerus exposed the scandalous lives and the lies of Protestant ministers and preachers through their biographies.<sup>54</sup> In his *Shield of the Catholics against the Heresies*, he compared Catholics and Protestants in seventeen chapters dealing with controversial issues, such as free will, the role of good works, the real presence in the Eucharist and the celibacy of the priests. It was, as a matter of fact, always the Catholics

---

<sup>49</sup> See on the Jesuits' substantial share in overall printing production Andriessen J., "Apostolaat met de pen, intellectuele en artistieke activiteiten", in E. Put – M. Wynants (eds.), *De Jezuïeten in de Nederlanden en het prinsbisdom Luik (1542–1773)* (Brussels: 1991) 61.

<sup>50</sup> Questier M.C., *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge: 1996) 13–14.

<sup>51</sup> Andriessen J., *De Jezuïeten* (note 18) 141–42.

<sup>52</sup> See for Costerus' works Van der Haeghen F. – Lenger M.-T., *Bibliotheca Belgica. Bibliographie générale des Pays-Bas*, 6 vols. (Brussels: 1964–75), vol. I, 847–954. A first analysis of his polemical literature in Andriessen, *De Jezuïeten* (note 18) 144–9.

<sup>53</sup> See on David Geerts-van Roey L. – Andriessen J., "Pater Joannes David s.j. (1546–1613)", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 30 (1956) 113–55. Cf. for his bibliography Van der Haeghen F. – Lenger M.-T., *Bibliotheca Belgica* (note 52) II, 69–95, and for an analysis of his polemical works Andriessen J., *De Jezuïeten* (note 18) 149–51.

<sup>54</sup> Costerus F., *Bewijs der ouder catholicker leeringh, met antwoorde op sommige tegenstellinghen* (Antwerp: Joachim Trognaesius, 1595).

who had the better of things.<sup>55</sup> Joannes David published, in 1601, his *Veridicus Christianus*, an emblem book conceived as a manual for the education of young people.<sup>56</sup> Most images aimed at explaining the principles of the Christian faith, but a number warned against the dangers of heresy. Plate 8 depicted the heretic as a Catholic traitor and a corrupt member of the Church [Fig. 2]. The French distich under the image runs as follows: 'Qu'est-ce l'heretique? De quelle boutique, Et de quel aloy? C'est un Catholique, Meschant, rogue, inique, Et traistre à la foy.'<sup>57</sup>

It is very unlikely that the polemical literature made many new converts. Everything seems to indicate that the authors aimed primarily at strengthening the faith of their co-religionists. The idea of a common enemy definitely enforced cohesion within Catholic ranks.<sup>58</sup> The same may apply to preaching activities and catechismal instruction.<sup>59</sup> It is beyond doubt that all these clerical efforts contributed to a process of mutual alienation. As a consequence, the Catholic Reformation movement acquired a strong anti-Protestant flavor. The rebellious Northern provinces were portrayed as the incarnation of evil and heresy.

<sup>55</sup> Costerus F., *Schildt der Catholijcken teghen de ketterijen: Inhoudende de principaelste geschillen die in onsen tijden opgeresen zijn in t' geloove* (Antwerp: widow C. Plantin and Jan Mourentorf, 1591).

<sup>56</sup> David J., *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp: Jan Moretus, 1601). A Dutch version was published in 1603, a second Latin edition in 1606. See on this book Waterschoot W., "Emblemataliteratuur uit de Officina Plantiniana in de zeventiende eeuw", in M. de Schepper – F. de Nave (eds.), *Ex Officina Plantiniana Moretorum. Studies over het drukkersgeslacht Moretus* (Antwerp: 1996) 454–58; Dompnier B., "Les marques de l'hérésie dans l'iconographie du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle", in *Siècles. Cahiers du Centre d' Histoire des Entreprises et Communautés. Vol. 2: Visages de l'hérétique* (Clermont Ferrand: 1995) 80–83, 89–92.

<sup>57</sup> David, J., *Veridicus Christianus* (note 56) plate 8, between pp. 26–27.

<sup>58</sup> Compare with Dompnier B., *Le venin de l'hérésie. Image du protestantisme et combat catholique au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1985) 196–7, Questier M.C., *Conversion, politics* (note 50) ch. 2, esp. p. 39, and Dedieu J.-P., "L'hérésie salvatrice. La pédagogie inquisitoriale en Nouvelle Castille au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle", in R. Sauzet (ed.), *Les frontières religieuses en Europe du XV<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1992) 78–87.

<sup>59</sup> Andriessen J., *De Jezüieten* (note 18) 181–92; Porteman K., "Na 350 jaar: de 'sermoenen' van Franciscus Costerus", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 47 (1969) 236–44; Cloet M., "De gevolgen van de scheiding der Nederlanden op religieus, cultureel en mentaal gebied, van circa 1600 tot 1650", in J. Craeybeckx – F. Daelemans – F.G. Scheelings (eds.), *"1585: Op gescheiden wegen..."* (note 35) 67–70.

*Conclusion*

In the first half of the century, Antwerp became a cosmopolitan city, a real metropolis which offered ample room for the exchange of ideas. The religious ferment at work in many parts of Europe reached Antwerp very early. Vigorous Protestant communities challenged the old Catholic Church which, until the 1570s, displayed a remarkable inertia. The politico-military struggle and the confessionalization process gradually eliminated the broad religious middle groups. From 1585 onwards, Antwerp was a stronghold of the Counter-Reformation. Both mass conversions and large-scale emigration contributed to confessional homogeneity.

It is difficult to pinpoint the motives behind the conversions. There undoubtedly was a complex matrix of religious, political and economic factors. The evidence from Antwerp suggests that non-religious motives played an important role. Repression and military defeat had an enormous effect upon the religious mentality and created large-scale defections among the Protestants, just as in France after the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre.<sup>60</sup> That economic factors were also at stake is obvious from the evolution of the reconciliations in 1585–1589. Whatever the motives were, the post-1585 ecclesiastical leaders tried to purify the city of heretical influences. They promoted a religious reform program with a pronounced anti-Protestant stamp. True faith and loyalty to the Spanish king were indissoluble values and stood in sharp contrast with rebellion and heresy.<sup>61</sup> It is undeniable that systematic religious education and propaganda contributed to the creation of a specific identity. As a result, by the end of the sixteenth century the once cosmopolitan Antwerp came to constitute a frontier of faith, a dam against the Protestant North.

---

<sup>60</sup> See for instance Benedict Ph., *Rouen during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: 1981), 129–30, 137, 243–4; Roberts P., *A city in conflict. Troyes during the French wars of religion* (Manchester: 1996) 154–55.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Andriessen J., *De Jezuïeten* (note 18) 51–52, 60–68.

*Selective Bibliography*

- ANDRIESEN J., *De Jezuïeten en het samenhorigheidsbesef der Nederlanden 1585–1648* (Antwerp: 1957).
- DOMPNIER B., *Le venin de l'hérésie. Image du protestantisme et combat catholique au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1985).
- HENDRICKX M., "Enkele cijfers in verband met de bekering van de Protestanten te Antwerpen in 1585–1589", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 41 (1967) 302–09.
- JANSSENS G., "Brabant in het Verweer". *Loyale oppositie tegen Spanje's bewind in de Nederlanden van Alva tot Farnese 1567–1578* (Kortrijk: 1989).
- MARINUS M.J., *De contrareformatie te Antwerpen (1585–1676). Kerkelijk leven in een grootstad* (Brussels: 1995).
- , *Laevinus Torrentius als tweede bisschop van Antwerpen (1587–1595)* (Brussels: 1989).
- MARNEF G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis 1550–1577* (Baltimore-London: 1996).
- QUESTIER M.C., *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge: 1996).
- THIJS A.K.L., *Van Geuzenstad tot katholiek bokwerk. Maatschappelijke betekenis van de Kerk in contrareformatorisch Antwerpen* (Turnhout: 1990).
- VAN LERIUS TH. (ed.), "Antwerpsch Chronykje. Uit den Boeck van de Sodaliteyt der Getrouwde, onder den titel van O.-L.-V. Boodschap der Soc. Jesu te Antwerpen", *De Vlaemsche School* 8 (1862) 122–30.

*This page intentionally left blank*

*IMAGINES PEREGRINANTES*  
THE INTERNATIONAL GENESIS AND FATE OF TWO  
BIBLICAL PICTURE BOOKS (BARREFELT AND NADAL)  
CONCEIVED IN ANTWERP AT THE END OF THE  
SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Ralph Dekoninck

*Verba volant, scripta manent.* One is tempted to reinterpret this Latin proverb in light of the 'intertraffic of the mind' in early modern times. Among the first forms of print, *Flugblätter* are well named from this point of view: these 'flying papers' allowed for the circulation of writing on a scale previously unheard of.<sup>1</sup> It is worthwhile noting that these single-leaf broadsides were often illustrated. Printed images followed closely upon the printed word, allowing for a first international dissemination of visual messages. *Imagines volant*: even more than texts, images have the power to cross borders, to lend themselves to all glosses and idioms, without changing form to do so. Only a word is required to give them life, according to the Humanist theory that conceives the image as a body without a soul when not completed by its poetic sister. The testimony of the Lyonnais Humanist Barthélemy Aneau is most eloquent when he tells us the discovery at his printer's workshop of a series of 'mute' prints that served to illustrate a translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* published in 1550:

J'ay privée familiarité à Macé Bonhomme imprimeur lyonnois, par laquelle estant un jour en sa maison, trouvoy quelques petites Figures pourtraictes et taillées, demandant à quoy elles servoient: me respondit, A rien, pour n'avoir point d'inscriptions propres a icelles, ou si aucunement en avoyent eu, icelles estre perdues pour luy. Alors je estimant que sans cause n'avoient esté faictes, luy promis que de muettes et mortes, je les rendrois parlantes et vives: leur inspirant ame, par vive Poësie.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See Schilling M., *Bildpublizistik der frühen Neuzeit: Aufgaben und Leistungen des illustrierten Flugblatts in Deutschland bis um 1700* (Tübingen: 1990).

<sup>2</sup> Aneau B., *L'imagination poétique* (Lyon: Macé Bonhomme, 1552) 6.

In 1700, the Amsterdam publisher Nicolas Visscher made similar remarks in the preface to one of his collections of biblical engravings: 'The pictures were mute. We wanted most of all to lend them a voice, without however calling on the miraculous, but by means of poetry, the natural interpreter of the painter'.<sup>3</sup>

Between these two dates, almost a century and a half went by marked by the international diffusion of illustrated literature, starting with the emblem genre: the European attraction to it became manifest as early as the first half of the sixteenth century. Humanism saw in this kind of 'image savante', inspired by hieroglyphs, a way of reconciling *res* and *verba*, a new alliance allowing access to a primordial wisdom and thus offering the conditions for a new *concordia mundi*. But this *lingua universalis* still remained confined to the Republic of Letters, the *imago figurata* only addressing itself to initiates, that is, to those able to plumb its depths and to appreciate its ingenuity.

The same was not necessarily the case for the first biblical picture books or picture Bibles, the inspiration for which is notably to be found in the *Bibliae pauperum* from the end of the Middle Ages.<sup>4</sup> According to the old Gregorian *topos* that made of the image a *liber idiotarum*,<sup>5</sup> it was not so much a question, in this case, of crossing borders as of reaching social classes deprived of access to literary culture. This was the catechetical mission pursued by the prototype of the genre: Luther's *Passional*, published in 1529. Comprised of fifty woodcuts, each accompanied by a summary of the biblical passage being illustrated, this *Leien Bibel* was aimed, in Luther's own words, at 'children and simple folk, who are better affected by images and parables than by simple words or teachings'.<sup>6</sup>

Beginning in the 1530s, this genre spread from Germany to France, principally to Lyon, where publishers such as Jean de Tournes, Guillaume Rouillé, the Trechsel brothers, and the Frellon brothers

<sup>3</sup> *Afbeeldingen Der voornaamste Historien, Soo van het Oude als Nieuwe Testament, Door verscheide van de geestrykste en vermaardste Tekenaars en Plaatsnyders seer Konstig Afgebeeld* (Amsterdam: 1700) fol. 4r.

<sup>4</sup> See Coelen P. van der, *De Schrift verbeeld. Oudtestamentische prenten uit Renaissance en Barok* (Nijmegen: 1998). Engammare M., "Les Figures de la Bible. Le destin oublié d'un genre littéraire en image (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles)", *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 106 (1994) 549–91.

<sup>5</sup> Gregory the Great, *Registrum Epistolarum*, XI, 10, *Ad Serenum Massiliensum Episcopum* (CC 140A, p. 874).

<sup>6</sup> *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* 10/II (Weimar: 1907) 458.

produced works with much higher literary and artistic ambitions, aiming their production for the most part at an audience of European bibliophiles.<sup>7</sup> With the city of Antwerp as its main publishing centre, the Southern Netherlands followed Germany and France by the second half of the century. As well as producing richly illustrated Bibles, the Antwerp printers launched themselves into the publication of *prentenbijbels* that differed somewhat from their German and French models, for they were not so much books as collections of engravings with an oblong format, produced by the most important artists of the time (such as Maarten van Heemskerck or Maarten de Vos) and most often accompanied by brief historical commentaries relegated to the bottom margin of the page. The most accomplished example is the *Thesaurus sacrarum historiarum veteris Testamenti* published by Gerard de Jode in 1579 and considerably expanded in the new edition of 1585.<sup>8</sup> As clearly indicated by the title, we are dealing here with a 'treasure' of print series signed by different artists and for the most part already published independently. The artistic value of the engravings has a tendency to crush the commentaries, which are reduced to hardly anything: one or two lines in Latin presenting the subject and outlining its moral significance. The unstable dialectic between *docere* and *delectare* has a propensity to break down: the pleasure awakened by the contemplation of the images tends to become an end in itself rather than a means for elevating the spectator's soul to the admiration of divine works, and beyond that, to

---

<sup>7</sup> The quality of engravings signed by the most important masters of the day (such as Hans Holbein or Bernard Salomon) bears witness to this, as does the poetic value of the texts written by Humanists such as Gilles Corrozet or Claude Paradin, who dedicated themselves to unveiling the essentially historical and tropological significance of the representations. Rather than insisting on the pedagogical value of images, these authors emphasised the pleasure to be drawn from the contemplation of engravings by the reader-spectator. This pleasure was, of course, not gratuitous, for it was supposed to lead to the love of God, as Gilles Corrozet brought to mind in the new edition of the *Historiarum Veteris Instrumenti icones*: 'En regardant ceste tapisserie / L'oeil corporel, qui se tourne et varie, / y peult avoir ung singulier plaisir, / Lequel engendre au coeur un grand desir / D'aymer son Dieu, qui a faict tant de choses / Dedans la terre et sainte Bible encloses' (*Historiarum Veteris Instrumenti icones ad vivum expressae* [Lyon: 1543] preface).

<sup>8</sup> *Thesaurus sacrarum historiarum veteris testamenti, elegantissimis imaginibus expressum excellentissimorum in hac arte virorum opera: nunc primum in lucem editus. Sumptibus atque expensis Gerardi de Iode. Anno 1585.* See Mielke H., "Antwerpener Graphik in der 2. Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts. Der *Thesaurus veteris Testamenti* des Gerard de Jode (1585) und seiner Künstler", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 38 (1975) 29–83.

the love of God, the author of the represented events. The Picture Bibles tended henceforth to be mostly understood and used as 'an entertaining abridgment of Biblical facts.'<sup>9</sup> 'The Bible is no longer anything more than a storybook.'<sup>10</sup>

It should be noted, however, that these remarks are not applicable to two other ambitious series of biblical illustrations, in the production of which Plantin played a decisive role: the *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum* (c. 1592) and the *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* (1593). The first was accompanied by the trilingual commentaries of the Familist heresiarch Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt, while the second was completed by the annotations and meditations of the Spanish Jesuit Jerome Nadal (or Hieronymus Natalis). If the *Thesaurus* is a collection of Flemish engravings brought together for an audience of essentially artists and collectors, the books of Barrefelt and Nadal have a different aim: to provide support for meditation and internalisation of the biblical message, without neglecting the quality of the prints which are supposed to foster the meditative process. Despite certain similarities, these two publications were to have diametrically opposed fates, in appearance at least, as their peregrination paths diverged between the North and the South. While the one was to become the paradigmatic monument of Jesuit engraving and Counter-Reformation spirituality, the other would repeatedly inspire the spiritualist trends of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch Republic.

In its most complete form, the *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum* brings together ninety-eight etchings, all signed by the Mechelen artist Pieter van der Borch, one of the main illustrators who worked for the *Officina Plantiniana*.<sup>11</sup> Sixty of them are devoted to the Old Testament,

<sup>9</sup> Engammare M., "Les Figures de la Bible" (note 4) 588.

<sup>10</sup> Engammare M., "Les Figures de la Bible" (note 4) 591.

<sup>11</sup> *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum. Images et Figures de la Bible. Beelden ende Figueren wt den Bybel*. We can read on the title-page: 'Exprimebat Iacobus Villanus, Anno Domini M.D.LXXXI'; and on fol. 2r.: 'In lucem editæ a Renato Christiano, Anno Domini M.D.LXXX.' See Hamilton A., "From Familism to Pietism. The fortunes of Pieter van der Borch's Biblical illustrations and Hiël's commentaries from 1584 to 1717", *Querendo* 11 (1981) 271–301. Visser P., "Jan Philipsz Schabaelje and Pieter van der Borch's etchings in the first and final state. A contribution to the reconstruction of the printing history of H.J. Barrefelt's 'Imagines et figurae Bibliorum'", *Querendo* 18 (1988) 35–76. Dekoninck R., "Entre Réforme et Contre-Réforme. Les *Imagines et figurae bibliorum* d'Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt et Pieter van der Borch", *Querendo* 29 (1999) 96–131. On the problems posed by the genesis, dating, and origin of the different copies and editions, see the hypotheses proposed by P. Visser correcting the solutions previously advanced by A. Hamilton.

thirty-eight to the New Testament. It should, however, be noted that most editions do not include this second part and it is most probable that the plates had already been published separately around 1584–1585. Moreover, only the Old Testament engravings are accompanied, on the opposite page, by trilingual commentaries (Latin, French, Dutch).

Begun by Plantin as early as 1582, the definitive edition of the *Imagines* only saw the light of day around 1592, when Franciscus Raphelengius, Plantin's son-in-law, published it in Leiden with false publication dates (1580–1581), with pseudonyms to designate both the author ('Jacobus Villanus') and the printer ('Renatus Christianus'), and without mentioning a place of publication. These precautions are easily understandable: the author of the commentaries was Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt, alias Hiël ('The Uniform Life in God'), the second leader of the Family of Love.<sup>12</sup> This sect, according to the judgment of both Catholic and Protestant authorities of the time, participated in the Fourth Way incarnated by the spiritualists, these 'Christians without Church' (Kolakowski) who attempted to establish themselves alongside the great denominational families, such as the Catholics, the Lutherans or the Calvinists.<sup>13</sup> The Familists presented themselves as fervent defenders of freedom in the face of all forms of power and promoters of tolerance as the foundation of the human brotherhood constituting one Family, beyond national and religious borders, united by a deep inner faith in Christ. The cosmopolitan and multi-confessional city of Antwerp, and more specifically the Plantinian circle, provided an auspicious location for the flowering of this cirenic utopia. The leading thinkers of the *Familia Caritatis*, who presented themselves as true prophets, succeeded in seducing

---

<sup>12</sup> In 1573, Barrefelt separated from the founder, Hendrik Niclaes, of whom Plantin had been the first printer. See Hamilton A., "Hiël and the Hiëlists: the Doctrine and Followers of Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt", *Querendo* 7 (1977) 243–86. Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (Cambridge: 1981). Moss J.D., 'Godded with God'. *Hendrik Niclaes and his Family of Love* (Philadelphia: 1981). Fontaine Verwey H. de la, "The Family of Love: Radical spiritualism in the Low Countries", *Querendo* 6 (1976) 219–71. On the Family of Love, see the contribution of J. Harris in this volume.

<sup>13</sup> See Mout M.E., "Spiritualisten in de Nederlandse reformatie van de zestiende eeuw", *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 111 (1996) 297–313. Fast H., *Der linke Flügel der Reformation. Glaubenszeugnisse der Täufer, Spiritualisten, Schwärmer und Antitrinitarier* (Bremen: 1962). Güldner G., *Das Toleranz-Problem in den Niederlanden im Ausgang des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Lübeck-Hamburg: 1968).

several humanists that gravitated around the *Officina Plantiniana*. Wishing to see the advent of a political harmony favourable to the expansion of art, science and commerce in those troubled and intolerant times, this 'small freemasonry of intellectuals dreaming of unity',<sup>14</sup> as so aptly put by Marcel Bataillon, adhered quite easily to the inner and non-dogmatic Christian faith promoted by Barrefelt.

The main tenets of the latter's doctrine are quite well presented in the preface to the *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum*.<sup>15</sup> In the beginning, God manifested himself through what Hiël called 'figurative services', an expression denoting the visible signs left to human beings still unable to serve God in spirit. However, man rapidly came to be contented by these exterior signs, which he took literally, hence becoming blind to the unique and essential signification of the biblical figures. Such a literal way of reading laid the foundations for distorted and diverging interpretations of the Scriptures, which only served to sow vain discord. Hiël resolved thereupon to reconcile human beings by teaching them anew the true meaning of the external figures. And the only way to reach this goal was to encourage the reader-spectator to move from the denotative images to the eternal truths of which they were but a trace or a sign. The spiritual commentary accompanying each plate was there precisely to effect this conversion of the gaze into a movement towards 'the spirit of the essence of Christ, towards which the images and figures lead us and in which they are fulfilled.'<sup>16</sup> In the case of Abel's murder by Cain [Fig. 3], for example, the former is assimilated to the innocence of God that lives in the hearts of all men, while the latter symbolizes the flesh which kills this innocence, thus repeating the sacrifice of the Lamb of God.<sup>17</sup> As this example shows, the biblical text is transformed into a rich allegory of the passions of the human soul in its daily reliving of the *Vita Christi*.

This spiritual path through the biblical figures does not reach full accomplishment, however, without its completion by the action of the Holy Spirit: only He has the power to open man's heart to divine love and the eyes of the human soul to celestial illumination.

---

<sup>14</sup> Bataillon M., "Philippe Galle et Arias Montano. Matériaux pour l'iconographie des savants de la Renaissance", *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 2 (1942) 154.

<sup>15</sup> For an edition of the French version of the preface, see Dekoninck R., "Entre Réforme et Contre-Réforme" (note 11) 125–30.

<sup>16</sup> Dekoninck R., "Entre Réforme et Contre-Réforme" (note 11) 126.

<sup>17</sup> Barrefelt H.J. van, *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum* (note 11) fol. 8.

‘The peaceful Spirit of God’ must come to ‘govern him, and to live in him in view of a renewal of life in Christ.’<sup>18</sup> To reach such a *renovatio*, the reader is invited to abandon the images and figures in order to ‘ruminate’ and feel within himself the spiritual meaning of what has just been revealed.

Running counter to the dominant trends of the biblical hermeneutics of the time (with their emphasis on literal and tropological meaning), Hiël’s teaching cannot be reduced to moral lessons which should be followed to ensure salvation, but aims at a veritable ‘renewal of inner life’ in order to reach the *homo novus*, this new Adam described by Hendrik Niclaes, first founder of the Family of Love. The model for this spiritual transformation remains Christ, in whom Scriptures are accomplished.<sup>19</sup> To read the Bible according to the ‘Spirit of Christ’ is to make it one’s own in one’s deepest interiority and ultimately to bring God to build his kingdom in the heart of man.

The essence of the Familist doctrine is thus condensed in the preface and put into practice in the commentaries accompanying Pieter van der Borch’s engravings. The themes important to the Family of Love are present: confidence in the salvation of the soul by an interior dialogue with God; contempt for all exterior forms of worship; a firm belief that, beneath the different symbols and liturgies, all Christian denominations are the expression of the same *credo*; a desire to simplify the foundations of faith in which Love plays a prominent role. More specifically, emphasis is placed here on a necessary return to the essence of the biblical message in view of going beyond what puts human beings and Churches at odds with each other, and thus attaining universal harmony under the sign of Christ. Exterior figures must be abandoned in order to come together in the one truth and eternity of God.

---

<sup>18</sup> Dekoninck R., “Entre Réforme et Contre-Réforme” (note 11) 126.

<sup>19</sup> This idea is illustrated quite literally on the title-page where Moses can be seen, on the left, holding the tablets of the Law and hovering over a heart, in the centre of which Adam, Eve, and the whole of Creation are represented as erring in darkness. On the right, Christ stands behind another heart, where human beings and nature seem to be leading a radiant existence. The idea according to which Mosaic Law is renewed and surpassed in Christ is thus clearly expressed. The Old Testament can therefore only be understood from a Christological perspective. Christ is the hermeneutic key that brings light to bear on the obscurity of the Old Testament. The citation from Isaiah (9, 2) inserted beneath the image comes to support this idea: ‘Habitantibus in umbra mortis lux orta est eis’ (in the Authorized Version, ‘they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined’).

This ascetic and mystical spirituality shows many similarities with the Neo-Stoic teaching so important for the Plantinian circle, teaching which advocated the 'tranquility or rest of the spirit' through the practice of Christian virtues and spiritual regeneration.<sup>20</sup> In this fashion, Hiël's work bears perfect witness to the syncretism characterizing the philosophico-religious atmosphere of the intellectual milieu in Antwerp at that time. It also incarnates a moment of synthesis between Humanist culture and Christian spirituality, between reason and faith, a synthesis cultivated in other spiritual and intellectual circles of the day. Inspired by a desire to edify the brethren, it is most probable that Plantin's aim in publishing the *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum* was to disseminate Barrefelt's doctrine within the international networks of pious men who might be attracted to this invisible church already so dear to Sebastian Franck and the spread of which extended to France, England, Germany and the Dutch Republic.<sup>21</sup>

It was only in the latter geographical area that the book of Barrefelt was to have any posterity. The first publishing circuit was secured in Leiden by Franciscus Raphelengius. Converted to Protestantism in 1586, Raphelengius seems to have been little inclined to printing the *Imagines* in their complete form, a project Plantin had been unable to finish before his death in 1589. It was only under pressure from Barrefelt and probably for purely commercial reasons that he finally agreed to produce this clandestine publication.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Plantin wrote to Guillaume Postel in 1567: 'Les hommes qui se sont rassemblés sous l'obédience de la Charité font ou veulent faire profession de renoncer à soy-mesmes et au monde pour ensuivre Christ en toutes tribulations, à la mort du péché, confusion du diable et ensevelissement de toutes les concupiscences charnelles jusques à la régénération avec Jésus-Christ pour régner avec luy à jamais' (*Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. I [Antwerp: 1883] 55). On the links between Familism and Neo-Stoicism, see Crombruggen H. van, "Een brief van Adriaan Saravia over Lipsius en 'het Huis der Liefde'", *De Gulden Passer* 28 (1950) 110–17.

<sup>21</sup> Translated into French very early on, the other writings of Barrefelt were only later made available in English and German translations, which found their way into Pietist circles. On the circulation networks of Barrefelt's works, see Hamilton A., "Hiël and the Hiëlists" (note 12) 266–82.

<sup>22</sup> We have deliberately left aside the study of the posterity of the other series of Van der Borch engraving with new commentaries by Barrefelt, which Raphelengius published under the title of *Bibelsche Figuren*. In this case, each engraving simultaneously represents the different episodes of a single biblical book, each episode being numbered in reference to the chapter from the Bible being commented upon. This series had a fate quite similar to the *Imagines*, as it was to be released again at the beginning of the eighteenth century by Izaak Enschede who also published works by other spiritualist authors such as David Joris, Servetus, Böhme, Coornhert,

In order to make this series more profitable in aiming it towards a broader market, Raphelengius put out a new edition in 1593, replacing Barrefelt's texts with Latin epigrams by the poet Bernardus Sellius, one of Plantin's proof-readers. He gave a new title to this publication: *Emblemata sacra*.<sup>23</sup> The ancient figures became thus emblems.<sup>24</sup> Moral precepts were drawn from these emblems, bringing this work closer to the *Picture Bibles* which circulated in Protestant milieus. Sellius however retained, with some tempering, the spiritual tenor of Hiël's commentary,<sup>25</sup> thus bearing witness to the assimilation of Familist teachings within the Plantinian circle.

It is in this same spirit and for a French-speaking audience that the bookseller Michiel Colin—a man of Arminian sympathies and seemingly familiar with Hiël's thought—reissued the *Emblemata sacra* in Amsterdam in 1613 and again in 1617.<sup>26</sup> Alastair Hamilton sees in the edition of 1617 'a conciliatory gesture performed for the benefit of the various religious factions'<sup>27</sup> that would the next year assemble at the Synod of Dordrecht. The decisions made at this Synod, which tended towards a 'Calvinisation' of the Dutch Republic, allow us to understand the silence that subsequently fell over Van der Borch's etchings and even more so over Hiël's commentaries. A new edition was published in 1639 by Claes Jansz. Visscher—'an ardent member of the Reformed Church in Amsterdam, a keen opponent of Arminianism who rarely missed an opportunity of lampooning the Remonstrants.'<sup>28</sup> It was then not until 1653 that Hiël's texts (with

---

Camphuysen, Bourignon, etc. See Hamilton A., "From Familism to Pietism" (note 11) 278–301.

<sup>23</sup> *Emblemata sacra, e præcipuis utriusque Testamenti historiis concinnata a Bernardo Sellio Noviomago* (Leiden: Franciscus Raphelengius, 1593). See Hamilton A. – Heesakkers Chr.L., "Bernardus Sellius Noviomagus (c. 1551–93), proof-reader and poet", *Querendo* 19 (1989) 163–224.

<sup>24</sup> Coelen P. van der, "Emblemata sacra? Biblical Picture Books and Emblem Literature", in J. Manning – K. Porteman – M. van Vaecck (eds.), *The Emblem Tradition and the Low Countries. Selected papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference* (Imago Figurata, Studies, 1b) (Turnhout: 1999) 261–78.

<sup>25</sup> We can quote again the example of Abel's murder by Cain: 'Oh brother Cain, thou wickedly killest thy brother Abel whose life is pure and free of crime. So does the flesh which surrenders wickedly to earthly cares often suppress the heavenly sparks within' (Hamilton A. – Heesakkers Chr.L., "Bernardus Sellius Noviomagus" [note 24] 187).

<sup>26</sup> *Emblemata sacra, e præcipuis utriusque Testamenti historiis concinnata a Bernardo Sellio Noviomago et a Petro vander Burgio Figuris æneis elegantissimis illustrata* (Amsterdam: Michiel Colin, 1613).

<sup>27</sup> Hamilton A., "From Familism to Pietism" (note 11) 289.

<sup>28</sup> Hamilton A., "From Familism to Pietism" (note 11) 291.

for the first time the author's name being mentioned in the title) reappeared, again accompanying Van der Borch's illustrations but now supplemented with other biblical engravings which had previously been published elsewhere (essentially in the *Thesaurus*).<sup>29</sup> This time the initiative was taken by a totally different personality, the Mennonite Jan Philipsz Schabaelje, whose interests no longer seemed to be so much commercial as ideological.<sup>30</sup> It was a question of breathing new life into Hiël's thought, as is shown in the preface, where the editor expresses his admiration for the 'very beautiful and interior interpretations' ('seer schoone en innerlicke verklaringen') of 'a man who had excellent insights concerning the sense of the Holy Scriptures' ('een man die trefflicke insichten hadt over den sin der Heyliger Schriftuere'). Schabaelje even went so far as to write the missing commentaries for the New Testament plates, attempting to respect Hiël's style, the spiritualist tones of which he maintained, while placing a more particular emphasis on the moral message in order to edify the reader. This last edition of the *Emblemata sacra* thus constituted an important relay in the dissemination of Hiël's doctrine, which spread to a certain extent into eighteenth-century Mennonite and Pietist circles.

Simultaneously to the publication of the *Imagines et Figuræ Bibliorum* of Barrefelt, the Antwerp Jesuits published the *Evangelicæ Historiæ Imagines*,<sup>31</sup> a folio volume of 153 engravings, completed two years later by the annotations and meditations of the Jesuit Jerome Nadal.

<sup>29</sup> *Emblemata Sacra, Bestaande in meer dan Twee hondert Bybelsche Figueren [...] Met bygevoegde verklaringen, en stichtelicke leeringen [...] het meerendeel eertijds uitgegeven en beschreven [...] door den diepgrondigen Hiel [...] Ende de resteerende zijn nu voltrocken en in order gestelt door Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje* (Amsterdam: Thymon Houthaak, 1653). The following year's reprint contained more than 400 plates: *Den Grooten Emblemata Sacra Bestaande in meer dan Vier hondert Bybelsche Figueren* (Amsterdam: Tymon Houthaak, 1654).

<sup>30</sup> Visser P., "Jan Philipsz Schabaelje" (note 11) 37–42. Visser P., *Broeders in de geest. De doopsgezinde bijdragen van Dierick en Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje tot de Nederlandse stichtelijke literatuur in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1988) vol. I, 71–447; vol. II, 165–89, 297–406.

<sup>31</sup> Natalis H., *Evangelicæ historiæ imagines, ex ordine Evangeliorum, quæ toto anno in misse sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitæ Christi digestæ* (Antwerp: 1593). See Fabre P.-A., *Ignace de Loyola: Le lieu de l'image. Le problème de la composition de lieu dans les pratiques spirituelles et artistiques jésuites de la seconde moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1992). Rheinbay P., *Biblische Bilder für den inneren Weg. Das Betrachtungsbuch des Ignatius-Gefährten Hieronymus Nadal* (Egelsbag: 1995). Wadell M.-B., *Evangelicæ historiæ imagines: Entstehungsgeschichte und Vorlagen* (Gothenburg studies in art and architecture, 3) (Gothenburg: 1985).

Apparently everything seems to separate these two ambitious editorial projects: while Barrefelt's book, condemned to anonymity, bore the mark of heterodoxy, Nadal's book was heralded as the radiant sign of an orthodoxy regained, to such an extent that it became a major reference work for Counter-Reformation iconography and the Gospel exegesis of seventeenth-century Catholicism.

Like Barrefelt's book, it was also undertaken as a long-term venture. In fact, the project for Nadal's *Imagines* goes back to the 1550s. From this moment onwards, it mobilised the key members of the early Company of Jesus, beginning with Ignatius of Loyola himself, who voiced the hope, as is reported in the dedicatory epistle to Pope Clement VIII, of seeing the publication of illustrated meditations aimed at the Jesuit scholastics. This task was entrusted to his closest disciple, Jerome Nadal, who set to work in the 1560s and continued the project until his death in 1580. The project was then taken up by his friend and secretary, Diego Jiménez, who initiated negotiations with Plantin. The Antwerp publisher had been contacted as early as 1576, but negotiations had been postponed as a result of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Antwerp following upon the Calvinist rise to power. They resumed in 1585, and the city was soon thereafter definitively chosen as the place of publication.<sup>32</sup> At this point Plantin was asked to find qualified engravers skilful enough to transpose onto copper the preparatory drawings produced by Roman artists. Among others, he proposed Pieter van der Borcht as a man who could engrave the plates at a good price and in a record time (eighteen months), a proposition rejected by the Jesuits because they judged the quality of the plates to be insufficient.<sup>33</sup> After several fruitless attempts with other engravers (Hendrick Goltzius, Philips Galle, Jan Sadeler and the Wierix brothers), Plantin asked in 1587 to be relieved of his mission, recommending instead that the plates be engraved in Rome.<sup>34</sup> The Jesuits persisted, however, and finally won their case

---

<sup>32</sup> In 1586 there were still plans to publish the volume in Rome, as is confirmed by the colophon at the bottom of the drawn frontispiece conserved in Brussels: *Roma in Collegio eiusdem Societatis. Anno M.D.LXXXVI.*

<sup>33</sup> At this same moment, Pieter van der Borcht was probably working on the illustration of the *De Universa Historia Dominicae Passionis Meditationes Quinquaginta* (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1587) of the Jesuit priest Frans de Coster.

<sup>34</sup> It should be underlined that he gave notice of this refusal in a letter, dated January 2, 1587, addressed to one of his main correspondents in this venture, the brother of the project leader: Ferdinand Jiménez, one of the main financial backers

by convincing the Wierix brothers to create the plates, which were only brought together with Nadal's texts in 1595 under the press of Martinus Nutius.<sup>35</sup> These plates were repurchased from Father Scribanus (Carolo Scribani) in 1605 by Jan II Moretus and his brother-in-law, Theodore Galle. Is it not symptomatic, as already remarked by Max Rooses, that the son of Philips Galle and the grandson of Plantin were precisely the ones to republish immediately the plates, once Nutius's privilege had ended, for which the father of the former and the grandfather of the latter had shown so little enthusiasm at their original production? The reason for this is that during the twenty-odd years that separated the refusal of the first pair and the adoption of the second, Antwerp became the stronghold of the Counter-Reformation North of the Alps.

From Antwerp, where they were republished several times up until 1707, the *Imagines* would spread throughout Europe and all the way into missionary lands, the book being judged by M. Ricci to be 'even more useful than the Bible, for it helps to explain, or rather to place in front of the eyes, what we are sometimes unable to explain by means of words.'<sup>36</sup> The images thus circulated independently of the text and were abundantly recopied and imitated, not only in engravings, but also in paintings and sculptures.<sup>37</sup> As for Nadal's meditations, also published separately, these were a ceaseless source of inspiration for Jesuits authors tempted towards a more mystical orientation (as for exemple, Baltasar Alvarez, Luis de la Puente, Alphons Rodriguez, etc.).

How can one explain this international diffusion? First, by the maturity of reflection characteristic of this edition, as it appears in

---

of the Plantin publishing house, and a person whose admiration for Barrefelt's thought is well known to us. See Rooses M., "De Plaatsnijders der *Evangelicæ historie imagines*", *Oud Holland* 6 (1888) 287. In July and August of the same year, Plantin wrote him a letter concerning the loan of some of Barrefelt's works (*Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. VIII-IX [Antwerp: 1918] 257-61, 265-68).

<sup>35</sup> Natalis H., *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia quæ in sacrosancto missæ sacrificio toto anno leguntur* (Antwerp: Martin Nutius, 1595).

<sup>36</sup> Quoted by Mauquoy-Hendrickx M., "Les Wierix illustateurs de la Bible dite de Natalis", *Querendo* 6 (1976) 61. See Jennes J., *Invloed der Vlaamsche Prentkunst in Indië, China en Japan tijdens de XVI<sup>e</sup> en XVII<sup>e</sup> eeuw* (Louvain: 1943) 83-88. Bailey G.A., *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542-1773* (Toronto-Buffalo: 1999).

<sup>37</sup> Mauquoy-Hendrickx M., "Les Wierix illustateurs de la Bible dite de Natalis" (note 36) 53-63.

the articulation between text and image: each engraving is divided into several scenes, the places, characters, and actions of which are marked by letters. These notes refer to an alphabetically ordered legend situated at the bottom of the page, where each letter corresponds to a brief identification of the annotated elements in the image. The pages following each of the plates are organized in an equally systematic manner. They begin with a text from the Gospel accompanied by his synoptics and annotated with letters corresponding to those used on the picture. Next comes the *adnotatio*, which develops the different points of the legend, thus comprising a kind of critical apparatus detailing the literal meaning of the sacred text. Finally, the third part comprises the *meditatio*, which gives an allegorical or mystical interpretation of the divine Word with a pronounced emotional tone. As was the case with Barrefelt's commentaries, this meditation 'devout and erudite' consists in adapting the message from the Gospel to the interior life of the meditator in order to encourage the internalisation of this message. For example, the journey of the Magi to the Infant Jesus (journey depicted through its different stages in the engraving [Fig. 4]) is interpreted as a metaphor for the spiritual itinerary of the soul towards Christ. Once Christ has been contemplated, the meditator, in imitation of the Kings, should take up his journeying once again in order to spread the revealed Truth.<sup>38</sup>

While the spiritual interpretation is quite similar to the one proposed by Barrefelt for the episodes from the Old Testament, it is markedly different by its prior foundation, thanks to the system of annotations, on a detailed analysis of the gospel pericopes, which serves the purpose of embedding the historical truth of the Scriptures. Nadal's meditation thus avoids the danger of dissolving the reality of the Gospel into mystical meanings, a danger that threatened in Barrefelt's exegesis. For in taking the spiritualization of biblical figures too far, one runs the risk of transforming historical truth into fable, as was asserted ten years later by the French Jesuit Louis Richeome, in his *Tableaux sacrez*: 'Were a person to spiritualise these stories to

<sup>38</sup> For an English translation, see Nadal J., *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels*, vol. I: *The Infancy Narratives*, translated by A. Homann (Philadelphia: 2003) 157–67. Melion W.S., "Artifice, Memory, and *Reformatio* in Hieronymus Natalis's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia*", *Renaissance and Reformation* 22 (1998) 5–33.

the point of denying their literal truth [...] he would undermine their historical basis and commit sacrilege against Scripture.<sup>39</sup>

Moreover, the elaborate layout adopted for this edition allowed one to avoid the ambiguity that might have arisen in the text-image relation of the *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum*. Without any reference points, these two parts might have appeared, in this last book, as completely autonomous, if not antagonistic. For even though Barrefelt's commentaries refer explicitly to the engravings, he almost at once turns from them as they only give a literal manifestation of the biblical texts, to which the commentator only attributes an introductory value in his mystical exegesis. This is not the case in Nadal's *Imagines*: by means of the footnotes, the reader-spectator is invited to move repeatedly back and forth between the text and the engraving. The natural polysemy of the image is thus limited. It is no longer possible to grasp each engraving in the instant of its contemplation, as was encouraged by Pieter van der Borch's plates, where the curious eye has a tendency to lose itself in the vast landscape surrounding the biblical scenes. On the contrary, the trajectory of the gaze is marked out in Nadal by constant reference to the accompanying text that serves as a guide. As such, meaning is no longer given in the instantaneous moment of vision, but unfolds over the time of reading and meditation.<sup>40</sup>

What conclusions can we then draw from the comparison of Barrefelt and Nadal's works and their respective fates? While the *Picture Bibles* of the day tended, as we emphasised, to lose their original vocation and to become nothing more than poems and images for historical knowledge and aesthetic pleasure, Barrefelt, like Nadal, seemed to want to re-establish the higher mission of this genre: to transmit the Word of God hidden in the biblical figures. Beyond a simple moral teaching, both authors aimed at a complete internal regeneration of the reader. While the means used to this end may have differed, both shared a similar religious sensibility. This is confirmed by their posterity, even if it did not unfold in the same

---

<sup>39</sup> Richeome L., *Tableaux Sacrez des Figures mystiques, du Tres Auguste Sacrifice et Sacrement de l'Eucharistie* (Paris: Laurent Sonnius, 1609) 403.

<sup>40</sup> Diego Jiménez writes in the preface to the reader: 'Expect no spiritual growth [...] from a mere glance at the pictures or wonder at their artistic beauty. Spend a whole day, even several days, with each image' (Natalis H., *Annotations and Meditations* [note 38] 102).

geographical areas. In any case, from a chronological perspective, this observation invites us not to be too strict in defining the break of 1585. It would be worth studying more closely the lines of continuity between the ideals promoted in the Plantin house before the death of the architypographer and those cultivated by the Antwerp Jesuits.<sup>41</sup> In a more contrasted denominational context, would the latter not succeed in preserving the studious and spiritual atmosphere that hung over the Plantin circle, albeit by excluding all traces of heterodoxy, and thus bring those who might have been tempted to distance themselves back into the bosom of the Church?

---

<sup>41</sup> On this question of continuity, it is interesting to note that the copy of the *Bibelsche Figuren* conserved at the Royal Library in Brussels (VB-651-A3) was the possession of the Jesuit college of the same city, as attested by the ex-libris.

*Selective Bibliography*

- BARREFFELT H.J. VAN, *Imagines et Figuræ Biblicorum. Images et Figures de la Bible. Beelden ende Figuren wt den Bybel* (Leiden, Frans Raphelengius: c. 1592).
- COELEN P. VAN DER, *De Schrift verbeeld. Oudtestamentische prenten uit Renaissance en Barok* (Nijmegen: 1998).
- , “Emblemata sacra? Biblical Picture Books and Emblem Literature”, in J. Manning – K. Porteman – M. van Vaeck (eds.), *The Emblem Tradition and the Low Countries. Selected papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference*, Imago Figurata, Studies, 1b (Turnhout: 1999) 261–78.
- DEKONINCK R., “Entre Réforme et Contre-Réforme. Les *Imagines et figuræ biblicorum* d’Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt et Pieter van der Borch”, *Querendo* 29 (1999) 96–131.
- Emblemata sacra, e præcipuis utriusque Testamenti historiis concinnata a Bernardo Sellio Noviomago* (Leiden, Frans Raphelengius: 1593).
- Emblemata sacra, e præcipuis utriusque Testamenti historiis concinnata a Bernardo Sellio Noviomago et a Petro vander Burgio Figuris æneis elegantissimis illustrata* (Amsterdam, Michiel Colin: 1613).
- Emblemata Sacra, Bestaande in meer dan Twee hondert Bybelsche Figuren [. . .] Met bygevoeghde verklaringen, en stichtelicke leeringen [. . .] het meerendeel eertijds uygegeven en beschreven [. . .] door den diepgrondigen Hiel [. . .] Ende de resteerende zijn nu voltrocken en in order gestelt door Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje* (Amsterdam: Thymon Houthaak, 1653).
- ENGAMMARE M., “Les Figures de la Bible. Le destin oublié d’un genre littéraire en image (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles)”, *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome* 106 (1994) 549–91.
- FABRE P.-A., *Ignace de Loyola: Le lieu de l’image. Le problème de la composition de lieu dans les pratiques spirituelles et artistiques jésuites de la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1992).
- HAMILTON A., “Hiel and the Hielists: the Doctrine and Followers of Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt”, *Querendo* 7 (1977) 243–86.
- , “From Familism to Pietism. The fortunes of Pieter van der Borch’s Biblical illustrations and Hiel’s commentaries from 1584 to 1717”, *Querendo* 11 (1981) 271–301.
- , *The Family of Love* (Cambridge: 1981).
- HAMILTON A. – HEESAKKERS CHR.L., “Bernardus Sellius Noviomagus (c. 1551–93), proof-reader and poet”, *Querendo* 19 (1989) 163–224.
- MAUQUOY-HENDRICKX M., “Les Wierix illustreurs de la Bible dite de Natalis”, *Querendo* 6 (1976) 28–63.
- MELION W.S., “Artifice, Memory, and Reformatio in Hieronymus Natalis’s *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia*”, *Renaissance and Reformation* 22 (1998) 5–33.
- NATALIS H., *Evangelicæ historiæ imagines, ex ordine Evangeliorum, quæ toto anno in missæ sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitæ Christi digestæ* (Antwerp: 1593).
- , *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia quæ in sacrosancto missæ sacrificio toto anno leguntur* (Antwerp, Martin Nutius: 1595).
- RHEINBAY P., *Biblische Bilder für den inneren Weg. Das Betrachtungsbuch des Ignatius-Gefährten Hieronymus Nadal* (Egelsbag: 1995).
- VISSER P., “Jan Philipsz Schabaelje and Pieter van der Borch’s etchings in the first and final state. A contribution to the reconstruction of the printing history of H. J. Barrefelt’s ‘*Imagines et figuræ Biblicorum*’”, *Querendo* 18 (1988) 35–76.
- , *Broeders in de geest. De doopsgezinde bijdragen van Dierick en Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje tot de Nederlandse stichtelijke literatuur in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1988).
- WADELL M.-B., *Evangelicæ historiæ imagines. Entstehungsgeschichte und Vorlagen*, Gothenburg studies in art and architecture, 3 (Gothenburg: 1985).

## JUSTUS LIPSIUS'S TREATISES ON THE HOLY VIRGIN\*

Jeanine De Landtsheer

Whereas Protestants branded the veneration of saints and their relics as idolatry and repudiated pious practices such as indulgences and pilgrimages to holy places, which had become enormously popular during the Middle Ages, Catholics kept stressing their usefulness, even their necessity for the redemption of the faithful. Protestants only accepted miracles which had occurred during the life of Christ and his Apostles; Catholics believed that the Lord was still imparting his grace through the intermediary of the saints on certain places, although they were quite apprehensive of fraud and malpractice. Hence in 1563 the Council of Trent decreed that, in case of miraculous feats, the archbishop responsible for the area had to examine thoroughly whether an alleged wonder was, indeed, an event of a supernatural order, or could be explained in a natural, rational way.<sup>1</sup>

From June 1587 on, the States of Holland explicitly forbade pilgrimages within the region on penalty of a heavy fine.<sup>2</sup> In the Catholic South, on the contrary, places of worship, in particular of the Virgin Mary, kept increasing in number and thrived as never before.<sup>3</sup> The fact that the Lord manifested himself so often in Catholic areas was put forward as a conclusive proof that the Church of Rome was right and Protestants were wrong. To give greater publicity to these

---

\* I am obliged to C. Fantazzi (Greenville, NC) for correcting my English, and to F. de Nave Director of the Museum Plantin-Moretus (Antwerp), for her permission to reproduce the photographs of illustrations 1 and 3.

<sup>1</sup> He had to build a case collecting reports of relatives, neighbours, physicians, parish priests about the previous condition of the healed person, and testimonies of eyewitnesses when God's grace had manifested itself, or immediately afterwards.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Proclamation of 23 June 1587, in Cau C. – Van Leeuwen S. – Scheltus J. e.a., *Groot-placaet-boeck, vervattende de placaten, ordonnantien ende edicten vande doorluchtige, hoogh mog. heeren Staten Generaal der Vereenigde Nederlanden*, 10 vols. (The Hague: 1658–1796) 1 (1658) 219, repeated several times during the next years.

<sup>3</sup> See the map of places of pilgrimage in the Netherlands and the region Meuse-Rhine, ca. 1580–1650 in Wingens M., *Over de grens. De bedevaart van katholieke Nederlanders in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* (Nijmegen: 1994) 18. The centers of Marian worship in Brabant are discussed in Wichmans A., *Brabantia Mariana Tripartita* (Antwerp: 1632).

places of grace the pilgrims were encouraged to purchase ‘spin-offs’, such as engravings of the church or the statue, pennants, and, for the lettered pilgrims, leaflets with special prayers or booklets describing the miraculous events, which were often available in several languages. That way the pilgrimages played an important part in the religious politics of the Archdukes, who wanted to propagate the ideas of the Counter-Reformation within their Provinces in order to create a strong, Catholic front after the religious troubles of the first decades of the Eighty Years War.<sup>4</sup> To ensure that their favourite shrines in Halle (near Brussels) and Scherpenheuvel (near Diest and Aarschot) be well-known in the scholarly world as well, they called upon Justus Lipsius (1547–1606), the Leuven professor famous for his writings and his correspondence throughout non-Islamic Europe. Lipsius’s *Diva Virgo* treatises, written during the final years of his life, had a huge success with several reprints and translations, at least in Catholic countries.<sup>5</sup> They also became a model for a number of similar issues written throughout the seventeenth century in both Latin and vernacular languages. Yet at the same time they were greeted with scathing criticism and howls of derision in Protestant areas, especially in the Northern Provinces: Lipsius had entered his second childhood, he had gone completely nuts. None of his followers provoked a reaction that was even by far comparable. To understand these reactions a limited survey of Lipsius’s life seems necessary.

### *Biographical Note*

In March 1591 Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) left the Calvinist Leiden University where he had taught for thirteen years. His friends in the

---

<sup>4</sup> Their most striking accomplishment is obviously the development of church and town of Scherpenheuvel as a bulwark of Counter-Reformation in the Southern Netherlands (Sharp Hill, Montaigu, a solitary hill, which was part of Zichem before the Archdukes decided to found a new town, to which privileges, rights and tax exemptions were conferred by a number of letters patent). See the well-documented and well-illustrated study by Duerloo L. – Wingens M., *Scherpenheuvel. Het Jeruzalem van de Lage Landen* (Leuven: 2002) 51–56, and Lombaerde P., “Dominating Space and Landscape: Ostend and Scherpenheuvel”, in Duerloo L. – Thomas W., *Albert and Isabella. The Promise of a Golden Age* (Brussels: 1998) 173–83 (esp. 177–81).

<sup>5</sup> A survey of editions and translations is given in Vander Haeghen F. – Lenger M.-Th., *Bibliotheca Belgica: Bibliographie générale des Pays-Bas*, 7 vols (Brussels: 1964–1975) III, 974–85 (L 306–328) and 1010–14 (L 391–98) [henceforward = BBr]. Of course, both treatises are included in the *Opera omnia* editions as well (cf. BBr III, 1018–29).

South—the Antwerp printer Christopher Plantin, the secretary of the archdiocese of Mechelen Nicolaas Oudaert,<sup>6</sup> and Lipsius's kinsman Willem Breugel, councillor of the States of Brabant, among them—had been negotiating his return to the Southern Netherlands and a tenure at Leuven University since 1586. Nevertheless, Lipsius had to wait patiently for another year in the neutral principality of Liège before the Spanish authorities and the States of Brabant, accepting his reconciliation with the Catholic Church and the Spanish King, allowed him to settle in his native country again. Meanwhile the famous humanist had assured himself of the support of the Jesuits, of Henricus Cuyckius, vice-chancellor of Leuven University, and of the Antwerp Bishop and humanist Laevinus Torrentius. On 9 August 1592 he finally arrived in Leuven; in November he started lecturing in Ancient History and Latin.<sup>7</sup>

Lipsius's initial delight and relief at being back at his *Alma Mater*, was soon damped because colleagues and scholars from abroad kept venting their suspicions about the purity of his motives and the soundness of his religious ideas. Yet, in spite of further, generous invitations from universities in Italy and from the French King, he preferred to remain in his country. He joined the Confraternity of the Holy Virgin,<sup>8</sup> which was thriving in Leuven, as in many cities of the Southern Netherlands, under the impulse and direction of the

---

<sup>6</sup> The second Archbishop of Mechelen, Johannes Hauchinus, died in January 1589. When both Philip II's candidates, Cardinal William Allen and the Antwerp Bishop Laevinus Torrentius, died shortly after declining the king's invitation to succeed Hauchinus, the see remained vacant until Matthias Hovius was consecrated on 18 February 1596. Cf. Harline C. – Put E., *A Bishop's Tale. Matthias Hovius Among his Flock in Seventeenth-Century Flanders* (New Haven-London: 2000) 21–24.

<sup>7</sup> See for the period when Lipsius was still in Leiden, for instance, an overlooked letter between Oudaert and Plantin dated 12 October 1586 (the original is preserved in Leiden Univ. Lib., ms. Lips. 4 [O]), which Petrus Burmannus, in spite of his doubt, included in Lipsius's correspondence (cf. Burmannus P., *Sylloges epistolarum a viris illustribus scriptarum tomus V* [Leiden: 1727] 1, 278, no 271. Lipsius's correspondence of the years 1591 (to be edited as ILE IV by S. Suë) and 1592 (= ILE V: *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae, pars V: 1592*, ed. J. de Landtsheer – J. Kluydens [Brussels: 1991]) offer detailed information about the efforts taken by Lipsius and his friends, which finally lead to his appointment in Leuven.

<sup>8</sup> Wherever the Jesuits established a college they organised a confraternity of St Mary, consisting of a group of laypeople, usually from the higher bourgeoisie and the secular clergy, to encourage personal devotion by praying and frequent use of the sacraments. The members were also expected to do pious works, to propagate faith among the commoners, and to correct apostates. See, for instance for Antwerp, Thijs A.K.L., "De Contrareformatie en het economisch transformatieproces te Antwerpen na 1585", *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 70 (1987) 97–124 (esp. 107–8).

Jesuits. Some of the members of the Leuven college, the theologians Martinus Antonius Delrio and Leonardus Lessius in particular, were among Lipsius's closest friends and confidants. The careful choice of patrons to whom he dedicated his successive publications—*De Cruce* (January 1594) to the States of Brabant, *De militia Romana* (June 1595) to the future Philip III, *Poliorcetica* (August 1596) to the Liège Prince-Bishop Ernest of Bavaria and *Admiranda sive De magnitudine Romana* (March 1598) to Archduke Albert of Austria<sup>9</sup>—was rewarded with increasing appreciation and trust from the authorities. On 14 December 1595 King Philip II granted him the title of *historiographicus regius*, implying an annuity of 1,000 florins<sup>10</sup> and explicitly recommended him to his cousin, Archduke Albert of Austria, upon the latter's arrival in the Southern Netherlands.<sup>11</sup> Three times Lipsius was asked by prominent politicians to give his opinion about the position the Spanish King should adopt in his external politics.<sup>12</sup> When the Archdukes held their Joyous Entry in Leuven they honoured him by being present at one of his lectures.<sup>13</sup> Finally, he was urged to place his outstanding reputation, as well as his scholarly activities in the service of the Catholic restoration as propagated by State and Church, in casu the Archdukes, the bishops and the Jesuits. Although Lipsius anticipated the destructive criticism, particularly in the North, he obliged. In 1604 his *Diva Virgo Hallensis* was issued, followed the next year by the *Diva Sichemiensis sive Aspricollis*.<sup>14</sup> During the final months of his life he even prepared a third treatise, the

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the dedicatory letters, respectively ILE V, 92 11 04; VIII, [95 04 21] P (ed. J. De Landtsheer [Brussels, 2004]); IX, 96 02 15 B; and XI, 98 03 01 A. The date between brackets refers to the month when the publication came from the press.

<sup>10</sup> ILE VIII, 05 12 14 GA.

<sup>11</sup> ARA, *Aud.*, Reg. 196, f. 8r.

<sup>12</sup> Scil. ILE VIII, 95 01 02 S; IX, 96 07 20 C, and XVII, 04 01 26 V. In April 1605 Lipsius was also appointed honorary member of the State Council.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Van Houdt T., "Justus Lipsius and the Archdukes Albert and Isabella", in *The World of Justus Lipsius: A contribution towards his intellectual biography. Proceedings of a colloquium held under the auspices of the Belgian Historical Institute in Rome (Rome, 22–24 May 1997)*, ed. M. Laureys e.a. (= Bulletin de l'Institut historique belge de Rome, 68) (Brussels-Rome: 1998) 405–32.

<sup>14</sup> The manuscripts used by the compositor and the printer are still extant, scil. in Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, Ms. 116 (*Diva Virgo Hallensis*) and Leiden, Univ. Lib., ms. Lips. 13 (*Diva Sichemiensis*) [henceforth abbreviated in the footnotes as *Div. Hal.* and *Div. Sich.*]. Both treatises and their reception are briefly discussed in Kronenburg J.A.F., *Maria's Heerlijkheid in Nederland. Geschiedkundige schets van de Vereering der H. Maagd in ons Vaderland, van de vroegste tijden tot op onze dagen, 7: Afdwaling en Bestrijding, Trouw en Verdediging. Gedeeltelijk 16e en 17e eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1911) 417–30 (*Div. Hal.*) and 353–60; 430–31 (*Div. Sich.*).

*Diva Virgo Lovaniensis*,<sup>15</sup> devoted to the so-called *Sedes Sapientiae* of St Peter's in Leuven. On 18 March 1606, however, Lipsius was afflicted by a fatal fever and he passed away in the night of 23–24 March 1606. Although the manuscript was completed and even provided with lay-out indications for the printer, it was shelved among Lipsius's papers and never looked at again.<sup>16</sup> Since an annotated edition with introduction and English translation is forthcoming, I have included this *Diva Virgo Lovaniensis* in this contribution wherever possible.<sup>17</sup>

### *Lipsius and the Places of Cult*

Before going into Lipsius's connection with the places of cult, a word should be said about the miraculous statues. When Sophie of Thüringen married Henry II, Duke of Brabant, her mother, Saint Elizabeth († 1231) offered her a number of statues of the Holy Virgin. Three of them were given by Sophie to her sister-in-law, Mathilde, wife of Floris IV, Earl of Holland and Zeeland. Mathilde († 1267) bequeathed one of these statues to the town of Halle. Soon the first miracles occurred and thanks to the increasing fame of the statue more and more pilgrims came flocking in. From 1318 bishops, papal nuncios, and even popes granted indulgences to whoever came and worshipped the Virgin of Halle at specific occasions. The list of sovereigns and high-ranked noblemen and their presents added in chapters 34–35 is quite impressive.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> I keep the title of the manuscript, preserved at Leiden University Library, shelfnumber ms. Lips. 12 [henceforth abbreviated in the footnotes as *Div. Lov.*].

<sup>16</sup> The only thing lacking is a dedicatory letter, but the correspondence between Lipsius and, especially, Balthasar Moretus makes it clear that such letters were usually written at the last minute, when part of the printer's proofs were already corrected, see, for instance, ILE XV, 02 02 05.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. a preliminary study in De Landsheer J., 'Justi Lipsi *Diva Lovaniensis*: an unknown treatise on Louvain's *Sedes Sapientiae*', *Revue d'Histoire Ecclesiastique* 92 (1997) 135–42. The first printed description of the miracles attested at St Peter's was issued by Bernard Heymbach, librarian of Leuven University Library: *Diva Lovaniensis seu mira beneficia a Deiparente ad aram sibi sacram in aede D. Petri immortalibus impetrata libri III* (Leuven: 1665). In his introduction he praised Lipsius as the author of the Virgin of Halle and of Scherpenheuvel, which he adopted as his model, but he was not aware of the existence of the *Diva Virgo Lovaniensis*. In the forthcoming edition of Lipsius's *Diva Lovaniensis* a comparison with Heymbach is discussed in the introduction and worked out more in detail in the annotations to each chapter.

<sup>18</sup> *Div. Hal.*, pp. 4–12 (chaps 2–3); see also *Halle 700 jaar Mariastad*, (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring, 7) (Halle: 1967).

The history of the Virgin of Scherpenheuvel is more complicated. Somewhere in the fifteenth century a small statue of the Blessed Virgin was placed against an oak tree on a hill. At the beginning of the sixteenth century a shepherd came across the image lying on the earth. Picking it up he put it in his satchel with the intention of taking it home. All of a sudden his limbs became leaden; it was impossible for him to move. He had to stand there without shifting a finger until his master, getting worried, came looking for him at sunset. After the shepherd had told him what had happened, his lord took the statue and restored it to its former place. At the same instant the servant could move freely again. An increasing number of pilgrims from neighbouring towns came imploring the Virgin's support, especially in cases of fever. Even when the statue was destroyed by Protestant rebel troops on their way to conquer Zichem in 1580, people kept coming to the oak. In 1587 a member of Zichem's town council (or, according to other sources, a pious widow from Diest a few kilometers further on) gave the parish priest of Zichem, Godefridus van Thienwinckel, a new statue. After being put in her proper place the Virgin immediately showed her gratitude by a flow of miracles gradually attracting people from all over Brabant and even further away. In 1602 the priest led the first procession to Scherpenheuvel and built a simple, wooden chapel, to protect the statue and its pious visitors against the weather conditions. It was only after Lipsius's death that architect Henri Meerte started with the construction of the heptagonal church according to the plan conceived by Wenceslas Coberger, which up to the present day welcomes pilgrims to the Virgin of Scherpenheuvel.<sup>19</sup>

The statue worshipped at St Peter's in Leuven was sculptured by Nicolaas de Bruyn in 1442.<sup>20</sup> It belongs to the romanesque type of the so-called *Sedes Sapientiae*, an incorporation of the 'Throne of Solomon', so typical of the first half of the thirteenth century.<sup>21</sup> Its

<sup>19</sup> *Div. Sic.*, pp. 6–11, chaps 3–4; Harline C. – Put, E., *A Bishop's Tale* (note 6) 96–100; Duerloo L. – Wingens M., *Scherpenheuvel* (note 4) 43–46 (the cult); 51–56 (the building of the church).

<sup>20</sup> According to city's account books he received the sum of twenty gold pieces for his work on 21 July 1442. Painter Roelof van Velp (or Velpen) collected an equal sum for polychroming the statue; master cabinetmaker Aert van der Horst provided a portable altar for the sum of twohunderd sixteen *plaques*, cf. SAL, ms. 9, *Jaerboeken van Loven*, f. 64v: 1442, *xxi<sup>a</sup> Iulii*.

<sup>21</sup> *Sedes Sapientiae* is one of the invocations of the Virgin occurring in the litany of Loreto, cf. Duerloo L. – Wingens M., *Scherpenheuvel* (note 4) 31–32.

manifest archaistic character can be accounted for by the fact that it replaced an older statue from the late-twelfth, early-thirteenth century, probably a gift from the chapter of Park Abbey (near Leuven) to the canons of St Peter's.<sup>22</sup> Although remaining testimonies proving its worship are scarce, it must be assumed that a cult of the Divine Mother was already existing long before the inauguration of the new statue, and was immediately transferred to De Bruyn's statue, especially as it gained the reputation of being miraculous. Individuals or groups of believers and pilgrims gathered around the Virgin's altar, imploring her blessings and interventions, or rendering words of thanks and praise. Even royalty and persons of the highest ranks presented themselves to worship Our Lady of Leuven.<sup>23</sup>

Lipsius's first visit to Halle dated from June 1601 [Fig. 5],<sup>24</sup> when he accepted an invitation from his old friend Dionysius Villerius to visit him and other friends at Tournai.<sup>25</sup> In the first chapter of the *Diva Virgo Hallensis* the Leuven humanist affirmed his readers:

The same affection had me longing for Halle for quite a time and finally I went. Yet when I arrived and eagerly entered the church and began to pray, I felt a mixture of trepidation and joy and awe striking me in body and mind; I felt the overt presence of Divinity, abundantly diffusing itself even in ignorant minds.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The statue had probably become too small for the high altar of the reconstructed church, consecrated in June 1441, or perhaps it was not huge enough to be clearly visible to the increasing crowds of worshippers and pilgrims, when carried around in the procession.

<sup>23</sup> *Div. Lov.* [= Leiden, Univ. Lib., ms. Lips. 12], chap. 2: *De templo, statua eiusque cultu, et miraculis primis*; Heymbach B., *Diva Lovaniensis* (note 17) 5–10 (= chap. 2: *Ara in qua statua, ipsa haec, initium cultus*). See also Martinus Geldolphus Vander Buecken, *Wonderen bystandt van de Alderheylighste Maeght ende moeder Godts Maria, bethoont aen haere getrouwe Diënaers in de vermaerde collegiaele ende parochiaele hooft-kercke van den Heylighen Petrus binnen Loven* (Leuven: Theod. C.J. De Zangré, 1757) 37–39 (*Oorspronck van het Beldt van O.-L.-Vrouwe in St-Peters Kercke tot Loven*) and 39–42 (*Figure van het vermaert Beldt van O.-L.-Vrouwe in St-Peters*); Essen L. van der, *Notre-Dame de St-Pierre (Louvain) 'Siège de la Sagesse' (1129–1927)* (Leuven: [1927]) 18–25; Maere, R., 'La Statue de Notre-Dame de Louvain, Sedes Sapientiae', in *Mémoires et Rapports du Congrès marial* (Brussels: 1921) 2, 495–504.

<sup>24</sup> The chapel with the statue of Our Lady at St Martinus', Halle (Antwerp, MPM B 1071, p. 14–15).

<sup>25</sup> ILE XIV, 01 04 11 V.

<sup>26</sup> *Div. Hal.*, pp. 1–2: 'Ab eodem deinde isto affectu Hallas diu adspiravi, tandem ivi. [...] Sed cum veni et calide templum adii ac preces coepi fundere, sensi trepido quodam gaudio et mixta veneratione corpus animusque percelli, et palam

He was overwhelmed by the impressive numbers of votive tablets and pious offers, testimonies of divine power, and expressed his worship in a poem.<sup>27</sup> Yet at the same time he was astonished that

despite countless testimonies of the Virgin's benefices passing any understanding and faith, and even transcending nature, nobody had ever thought of committing them to script and spread the glory of the Lord and the Virgin.<sup>28</sup>

The next year, after a serious illness, Lipsius paid another visit to Halle between 2 and 9 June. At this occasion he offered the silver pen with which he had written his major works.<sup>29</sup> In the middle of September 1604 he made use of a short stay in Brussels to return to Halle once again to thank the Virgin for his recovery from an illness lingering throughout the summer.<sup>30</sup>

There are no traces in the existing correspondence that he ever visited Scherpenheuvel, but in view of its distance from Leuven, it is quite probable that he went there as well on a one or two days' journey, without mentioning it. On the other hand the correspondence from October 1603 on refers time and again to visits from friends and acquaintances passing by Leuven on their way to or from Scherpenheuvel. This was, for instance, the case with treasurer-general Jan van Drenckwaert and his wife, lawyer and councillor Otho Hartius and his family, who hoped that the Virgin would cure

---

in loco Numen esse, quod vel ignaris mentibus se superfundat.' In the margin is added 1601.

<sup>27</sup> *Ode ad Divam Hallensem ab intervallo inspectam et veneratam*, cf. *Div. Hall.*, pp. 3–4. The poem is written in four-line stanzas, combining an alteration of three Glyconic verses and/or Pherecrateans concluded by an Adonic verse.

<sup>28</sup> *Div. Hal.*, chap. 1: 'Ubique FACTA MIRANDA, supra captum aut fidem hominem, supra ipsam naturam; et inter tot miranda subiit illud mirari, nondum fuisse qui ea scripto complecteretur et Dei ac Virginis gloriae divulgaret.'

<sup>29</sup> ILE XIV, 02 06 10 to Balthasar Moretus: 'Hallis fui, here sub noctem rediit' and ILE XV, 02 06 13 V: 'Antverpia me vidit, nunc Bruxella, sed et Hallae, ac votum hic Divae Virgini (disce e carmine) persolvi. Vides me arma suspendere et otium moliri', and Miraeus, *Vita sive Elogium Iusti Lipsi Sapientiae et Litterarum Antistitis* (Antwerp: David Martinus, 1609) 39–40: 'Anno insequenti [1602] noster in gravissimam aegritudinem incidit, votum fecit, Hallas se contulit. Clientem sibi supplicem Diva recreavit ac valetudini paulatim restituit. Ipse pennam argenteam in templo ante aram Virginis suspendit et pios hosce versus subscripsit', followed by the poem; which is also printed in *Div. Hal.*, pp. 79–81 (chap. 36). See also Papy J., 'Une imitation de Catulle 4: la *Dedicatio pennae Iusti Lipsi* de François de Montmorency', *Les Études Classiques* 60 (1992) 253–61.

<sup>30</sup> ILE XVII, 04 09 18, 2.

his mute son, and Johannes Moretus with his family.<sup>31</sup> Balthasar Moretus too was encouraged to go and invoke the help of the Virgin, or at least pray to her. Early November 1603 he accepted Lipsius's invitation and spent a few days in the company of his former tutor before continuing his journey to Scherpenheuvel.<sup>32</sup> He repeated his pilgrimage the next year at the feast of the Visitation (2 July).<sup>33</sup>

With regard to Leuven, it is only too obvious that Lipsius, as an inhabitant of the city and a member of its University, must often have gone to mass to St Peter's or to pray before the Virgin [Fig. 6].<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the statue was carried around the city at least once a year at the occasion of the kermis (first Sunday of September). Finally, according to Aubertus Miraeus's biography, Lipsius asked his wife on his deathbed to offer his best gown to the *Sedes Sapientiae* at St Peter's; afterwards it was purchased by his colleague Gerardus Corselius and the proceeds were used for the cult of the Virgin and her altar, according to the deceased's wish.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Diva Virgo Treatises: Genesis and Description*

The correspondence gives a fairly good idea of the genesis of the Virgin treatises. Late October 1603 or in the first days of November Johannes Hovius, a prominent citizen of Antwerp, and Aubertus

---

<sup>31</sup> For Van Drenckwaert and Hartius, cf. ILE XVI, 03 10 14 and 03 10 21. Moreover, Lipsius had extolled the praise of Scherpenheuvel in ILE XVI, 03 10 05, a letter omitting the name of its destinee. The editor of ILE XVI, F. Vanhaecke, rightly presumes him to be Jan van Drenckwaert. Johannes Moretus might have visited Scherpenheuvel at the end of October 1524 (cf. ILE XVII, 04 10 24 M), but certainly went there about one year later (cf. ILE XVIII, [05] 10 27 M and 05 11 02, confirming his safe return. See also more generally ILE XVIII, 04 08 05 T: 'Praeter languorem [...] etiam amici aderant qui interpellabant scribere; amici, dico, recenter a Diva Virgine, ad quam crebri eunt remeantque.'

<sup>32</sup> Cf., for instance, ILE XVI, 03 10 21; 03 10 24; 03 11 09.

<sup>33</sup> Balthasar informed Lipsius of his intention in ILE XVII, 04 05 25; he returned home on 8 July, cf. ILE XVII, 04 07 09.

<sup>34</sup> The *Sedes Sapientiae* at St Peter's, Leuven (photo: T. Gulinck).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Miraeus' *Vita sive Elogium Iusti Lipsi* (note 28) 46. Lipsius's gesture of offering his gown, or before in Halle, his pen, was certainly not exceptional, although it has been ridiculized in Protestant writings. A famous predecessor is Archduke Albert, who dedicated his cardinal's robe and hat to the Virgin of Halle on 12 July 1598, on the verge of his leaving for Spain to marry the Infante Isabella, cf. Duerloo L. – Wingens M., *Scherpenheuvel* (note 4) 34.

Miraeus, a former student of Lipsius, canon and nephew of the future Bishop of Antwerp, Johannes Miraeus, had provided the Leuven humanist with a copy of the registers attesting and describing the miracles.<sup>36</sup> Lipsius set out to write his treatise soon afterwards, making a selection, polishing the reports, making them more lively by adding little conversations or evoking emotions, but without changing the outlines. Never did he write more smoothly, gladly or quickly. The text poured down in not even ten days, as he claims in the preface to the reader.<sup>37</sup> The exact amount of days might be an exaggeration, but he certainly did not shelve the notes given to him. Encouraged by his friends—Miraeus must have enquired after the progress of the work together with his New Year's greetings—Lipsius had the text finished on 5 January 1604, as he affirmed to his friend and confidant Nicolaas Oudaert. In this letter too he underlined the ease with which he had written.<sup>38</sup> The manuscript was sent to his usual book censor in Leuven, Guilielmus Fabricius Noviomagus, who granted his *approbatio* on 28 January.<sup>39</sup> Nicolaas Oudaert, as official of the archbishopric Mechelen,<sup>40</sup> was asked to cast a final glance. To avoid any possible criticism about the miracles of more recent times, which according to the ordinances of the Tridentine Council had to be examined and confirmed by the archbishop in whose jurisdiction they occurred, he urged Lipsius to send the manuscript to Guillaume de Berghes, archbishop of Cambrai.<sup>41</sup> The latter granted

---

<sup>36</sup> They are mentioned in the *Ad lectorem* of the *Diva Hallensis*; on 3 November 1603 Lipsius wrote them a letter to express his gratitude (ILE XVI, 03 11 03 MH), cf. the argumentation of Sacré D., 'An Unknown and Unpublished Letter from Claudio Acquaviva, SJ, to Justus Lipsius (1604) (with some other unpublished Letters)', *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 51 (2002) 259–72 (esp. 260, note 5).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Div. Hal., Ad lect.:* '[...] apicem non detraxi aut addidi, nisi quod digessi, concinnavi et affectus obiter miscui orationi erigendae aut animandae. [...] Ex facili mihi et iucunda opera haec fluxit, et testificor: non decem totos dies illi impensos.'

<sup>38</sup> ILE XVII, 04 01 05: 'De Diva Virgine, ita est, absolvi, et scripturus ad te eram, sed Miraeus, ut video, praevenit. Narro autem tibi: nulla unquam scriptio mihi facilior et magis sub manu successit, annon ipsa illa Diva ingenio et stilo meo adspirante?'. Miraeus's letter is not preserved.

<sup>39</sup> *Div. Hal.*, f. M3v.

<sup>40</sup> An *official* is a judge of a diocesan court, who was a priest with degrees in law, often both civil and canon, cf. the *Glossary* in Harline C. – Put, E., *A Bishop's Tale* (note 6) 313.

<sup>41</sup> ILE XVII, 04 02 13, a letter from Balthasar Moretus to Lipsius: '[...] donec a D[omino] Oudarto *Divam Hallensem* recepero. Ille vero de novis aliquot miraculis dubitabat an adiecisses, et pro his, non veteribus, alia extra ordinem approbatione opus esse censebat.'

his *imprimatur* on 4 April; two days later he expressed the admiration and gratitude of himself and his counsellors in a letter.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile Moretus had sent a Brussels painter to Halle to depict the chapel with the altar and its statue, and the town itself; afterwards his work was copied by a painter in Antwerp and engraved by Cornelis Galle and Adriaen Collaert. The afore-mentioned Johannes Hovius paid the total cost for these plates.<sup>43</sup> The *Officina Plantiniana* did not dawdle: in the course of May the work was on the press; two weeks later Balthasar Moretus sent Lipsius the first printer's proofs.<sup>44</sup> On 15 July Lipsius, remembering Oudaert's concerns, dedicated the booklet to Guillaume de Berghes and underlined his correspondent's authority as a guarantee of the miracles' authenticity.<sup>45</sup> The first copies were distributed among friends in the middle of August, 1604.

Together with his congratulations Oliverius Manaraeus suggested that Lipsius proceeded and devoted a second treatise to the *Diva Aspricollis*, who was attracting ever larger crowds of pilgrims.<sup>46</sup> On 8 September 1603, the feast of the Virgin's birthday, about 20,000 pilgrims allegedly prayed at the shrine, although Matthias Hovius, Archbishop of Mechelen, had not yet confirmed Scherpenheuvel as a place of worship.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile Hovius had asked Johannes Miraeus to gather and examine as many testimonies as possible; the Antwerp bishop had passed this task on to Philip Numan, municipal secretary of Brussels, who soon gave a positive advice and even published his reports in three languages: Dutch, French (meant for the local nobility), and Spanish (intended for the court in Brussels).<sup>48</sup> He sent

<sup>42</sup> Cf. resp. *Div. Hal.*, f. M3r and ILE XVII, 04 04 06.

<sup>43</sup> Antwerp, MPM, Arch. 124, *Graveurs*. 2, 1555–1825, p. 323; see Imhof D., 'The Illustrations of Works by Justus Lipsius published by the Plantin Press', in G. Tournoy – J. De Landtsheer – J. Papy (eds.), *Justus Lipsius, Europae Lumen et Columna. Proceedings of the International Colloquium Leuven-Antwerp 17–20 September 1997*, Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia, 15 (Leuven: 1999) 67–81 (esp. 72–73).

<sup>44</sup> ILE XVII, 04 05 20 and 04 06 01.

<sup>45</sup> ILE XVII, 04 07 15.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Lipsius's answer, ILE XVII, 04 09 29 M; Manaraeus's letter is not preserved.

<sup>47</sup> Even Archdukes Albert and Isabella did not wait for his approval: in July 1603 they sent a sum of money covering the substitution of the wooden chapel by a stone one; the next month they vowed to come and pray in person, if 's-Hertogenbosch, one of the main cities of Brabant, would hold out against the siege by Maurice of Nassau's troops. After Prince Maurice's sudden retreat in the first week of November, they kept their promise and came to Scherpenheuvel, cf. Duerloo L. – Wingens M., *Scherpenheuvel* (note 4) 45.

<sup>48</sup> Scil. *Historie vande miraculen die onlanx in grooten getale gebeurt zyn door de intercessie*

Lipsius a copy of the French translation at about the same time that Manaraeus wrote his letter, pointing out the need of a Latin version.<sup>49</sup> Lipsius's main objection was that Johannes Miraeus had already taken up the subject and even asked Lipsius to cast a glance at his manuscript. However, when the Antwerp bishop assured him that nobody was more suitable for the task, Lipsius agreed to write a second treatise, asking for only a brief delay to complete his *Monita et Exempla* and his Seneca edition.<sup>50</sup> Numan's extant version and the limited number of miracles, because the divine presence was only recently manifesting itself, enabled Lipsius to have his text ready within hardly a few weeks. On 20 January 1605 he affirmed that the manuscript was at the printer's—implying that it had already been approved by the Leuven bookcensor—, but still needed the authorisation of Matthias Hovius, Archbishop of Mechelen, because all the miracles occurred recently, after the Council of Trent.<sup>51</sup> Apparently Lipsius had not forgotten Oudaert's remark in the final stage of his previous treatise! In March he was already correcting the first proofs;<sup>52</sup> on 17 April he dedicated the treatise to Infante Isabella Clara Eugenia, praising her modesty and piety, and asserting that in the warlike situation her vows and prayers would prove as effective as the counsels and weapons of her husband.<sup>53</sup> Once again Lipsius had assured himself of a mighty patron to ward off possible criticism within the Catholic camp. In the middle of May Balthasar had the first copies distributed among Lipsius's friends.<sup>54</sup>

---

*ende voorbidden van die Heylighe Maghet Maria op een plaetse genoemt Scherpenheuvel bij die stadt Sichen in Brabant* (Brussels: Rutger Velpius, 1604). The French and Spanish versions were published a few months later, also by Rutger Velpius. Cf. Duerloo L. – Wiggins M., *Scherpenheuvel* (note 4) 37–38. An article comparing Numan's *Historie vande miraculen* and Lipsius's *Div. Sich.* is forthcoming.

<sup>49</sup> ILE XVII, 04 10 05. Although the name of the destinee is not mentioned, the topics discussed in the letter make it obvious that it was Numan.

<sup>50</sup> ILE XVII, 04 10 18. Once again only Lipsius's answer is available.

<sup>51</sup> ILE XVIII, 05 01 20. Both *approbationes* are inserted on f. I 3v, but unfortunately neither is dated.

<sup>52</sup> ILE XVIII, 05 03 04; Moretus assured him that he had changed a quotation of Augustine (either on pp. 4 or 5).

<sup>53</sup> ILE XVIII, 05 04 17 I.

<sup>54</sup> ILE XVIII, 05 05 17; he had completed Lipsius's list of Antwerp acquaintances with the Jesuit Fathers Carolo Scribani and Andreas Schottus, and Johannes Hovius, who had paid the expenses for the engravings of the *Virgo Hallensis*.

A comparison between the three treatises shows that Lipsius worked along the same concept. The dedicatory letter, which has already been discussed, was followed by a *Praefatio ad Lectorem*, in which the author made another attempt to protect himself. In the *Diva Hallensis*,<sup>55</sup> he anticipated possible reproofs against the subject of his choice: why set out upon unaccustomed paths, why touch transcendent matters? In his answer to the first objection, Lipsius affirmed that he was merely reporting the miraculous feats of the Virgin, without further elaborating on specific religious matters, in other words that he was keeping himself strictly within the bounds of historiography.<sup>56</sup> The second reproval was countered by emphasizing that he had made a careful selection of the most memorable miracles from the extant acts and recordings, all bearing the testimonies of pious men or magistrates. Bishops Miraeus and Hovius could vouch that not a single dot or dash was altered, except for reasons of style.

In the *praefatio* of the *Diva Sichemiensis*, Lipsius confessed that he was even more attracted by this new subject, so nearby and so admired by all asunder [Fig. 7].<sup>57</sup> Here too, he accentuated the trustworthiness of his sources, for the bishop of Antwerp had approved the miraculous events after a careful examination on behalf of Archbishop Hovius. He had relied on the former's notes and draft, as well as on Numan's treatise in the vernacular. Lipsius also apologized for the lack of variation in the themes,<sup>58</sup> and warned his reader that his style was not as flourished as in his other works: his purpose was none other than the glory of the Virgin.

<sup>55</sup> *Div. Hal.*, f. [\*4 r-v].

<sup>56</sup> 'Nam per Virginem matrem quae memoranda et admiranda patrare ei visum narravi; narravi, inquam, non subtiliter aut tenuiter aliquid super religione disputavi. Itaque intra fines meos mansi et ipsum tituli mei atque inscriptionis agrum colui, id est Historiam scripsi.' With the last sentence Lipsius refers to his title of *Historiographus Regius*. It is also a paraphrasis of the proverb 'Spartam nactus es, hanc orna', cf. Erasmus, *Adagia*, 2, 5, 1. One should not forget, however, that the purpose of the treatise was apologetic!

<sup>57</sup> Title page of the *editio princeps* of the *Diva Sichemiensis* (Leuven, 1605); Antwerp, MPM A 1371.

<sup>58</sup> Because the miracles of Scherpenheuvel all happened after 1600, the decrees of the Tridentine Council prevailed, listing merely the same type of miracles as in the Bible, and leaving out more spectacular or original cases implying shipwrecks, fires and prisoners (cf. *infra*).

In the manuscript of the *Diva Lovaniensis* two entirely different prefaces 'to the reader' are preserved. The original, erased version was much sharper and was clearly written more or less as a challenge both to non-Catholics, who poked fun with his devotion to the Virgin, and to possible critics from his own side, who might object that, being a philologist and a philosopher, he nevertheless ventured into theology. Hence it has many points in common with that of the *Diva Hallensis*. Lipsius further claimed that he only wanted to relate some of the miraculous feats of the Holy Virgin of Leuven, a subject never treated before, and pointed out that they were carefully noted down and witnessed in a register. In the rethought version he merely explained his reasons for choosing precisely that subject. The Virgin of Leuven had granted numerous great blessings for about 160 years. Her miracles, at first profuse, had gradually become scarce. Some were witnessed by people who were still living; others had been carefully attested: only a sceptic would show any doubts. A truly wise man, on the contrary, would simply believe without trying to understand.

Next comes the main part of the work. Author and printer preferred the same lay-out for both published *Divae*: the same fonts are used, the title is repeated in larger characters; then follows the header of the chapter in small capitals, with underneath an *argumentum*, a summary in italics. Similar indications are given in the manuscript of the *Diva Lovaniensis*.

The first chapters are preliminary; the actual narrative of the miracles begins in chapter 8 (*Div. Hal.*), chapter 6 (*Div. Sich.*), or chapter 3 (*Div. Lov.*). The *Diva Hallensis* opens by explaining Lipsius's devotion to the Virgin (chap. 1), whereas the first two chapters of the *Diva Sichiensis* are a plea for the credibility of wonders in general, as well as for the benefit and purpose of narrating them.<sup>59</sup> The opening chapter of the *Diva Lovaniensis* continues the ideas of its (second) preface and underlines the importance of propagating the miracles in praise of the Lord and the Virgin. In the three treatises Lipsius dwells upon the origin of the statue and on the church. In the printed *Divae* this is preceded by an etymological explanation of the name of the town and its geographical position, considered

---

<sup>59</sup> Lipsius might have followed here the advice of his Augsburg friend Marcus Welser, cf. ILE XVII, 04 12 14 W.

superfluous in the *Diva Lovaniensis*, because it had already been discussed in the opening chapters of the *Lovanium* only a few months before.<sup>60</sup> In the *Diva Hallensis* a chapter follows elaborating on how one can distinguish between true and false miracles (chap. 5); before focusing on individual cases the exceptional protection of the Virgin towards the city, the church and the statue are given. In the introduction of the *Diva Sichemiensis* Lipsius returns to the contemporary history: the abolition and substitution of the older statue by a new one and the miracle of 1603, when the statue was sweating drops of blood,<sup>61</sup> which was soon interpreted as a reference to the blood shed during the Eighty Years War between the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, an expression of the Virgin's sorrow and even a promise that she would intervene and finally solve the discord.<sup>62</sup>

Then begins the description of the miracles concerning individuals in most cases: thirty-four in the *Diva Hallensis*, situated between August 1390 and 1603; forty in the *Diva Sichemiensis*, between 7 July 1601 and 7 July 1604; and 38 in the *Diva Lovaniensis* from 25 September 1442 to the autumn of 1599. At the end the *Diva Hallensis* adds two extra chapters on the confraternity of the Holy Virgin, giving a list of the most important visitors and recalling the precious gifts they brought with them.<sup>63</sup> In the first and the third treatises a chronological order is followed. In the *Diva Sichemiensis* less attention has been paid to the chronology—often there is no date, not even a year—which must be explained by the fact that the events included did all occur within the past three years. When in 1622–1623 Lipsius's pupil and successor Erycius Puteanus reissued Lipsius's *Diva Sichemiensis* together with a sequel of the wonders that happened after his tutor's death,<sup>64</sup> he took care to put Lipsius's miracles in a strictly chronological order, thus adjusting his predecessor's composition to that of his own work.

<sup>60</sup> *Lovanium: id est oppidi et academiae eius descriptio. Libri III* (Antwerp: 1605).

<sup>61</sup> According to Numan's *Historie vande miraculen* (Leuven, 1604, 46–48) this happened on 3 January; according to Lipsius, *Div. Sich.*, pp. 11–12 right after Easter.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Lipsius's poem at the end of chap. 5, pp. 12–13.

<sup>63</sup> Again this list of prominent visitors and their presents must be seen as an argument vouching for the authenticity of the wonders in Halle.

<sup>64</sup> Scil. *Iusti Lipsii Diva Virgo Aspricollis: Nova eius Beneficia et Admiranda* (Leuven: Henricus Haestenius – Philippus Zangrius, 1623) which was preceded by *Erycii Puteani Diva Virgo Aspricollis: Beneficia eius et Miracula Novissima* (ibid.: 1622), written

It can be readily assumed that Lipsius followed his written sources closely, be it the registers in the case of Halle and Leuven, or the reports published by Philip Numan in the case of Scherpenheuvel. Time and again, however, Lipsius warned his reader that he was not pursuing exhaustiveness, but rather preferred a representative selection instead of having his readers bored with yet another description of how a lame person was suddenly able to walk again. In an attempt to give an idea of the frequency and, at the same time, avoid monotony, the *Diva Lovaniensis* opens with a description of four miracles happening on the same day, 25 September 1442 (chap. 3), followed by six miracles of the same month, October 1442 (chap. 5) and, finally, a number of wonders selected from the annals of the year 1443 (chap. 6).<sup>65</sup> Within its genre, Lipsius's treatises are, indeed, much more pleasant to read than, e.g., Numan's *Historie vande miraculen* on Scherpenheuvel or the afore-mentioned Heymbach's first printed version of the miracles at St Peter's in Leuven. Another way to enliven the account is stylistic: in the three treatises prose is interwoven with poetry, often iambic trimeters.<sup>66</sup> Sometimes the whole chapter is in verses, sometimes a part is in prose as well. In the *Diva Hallensis*, for instance, chapters 15–18 all discuss cases of children who died by suffocation, but were resuscitated by the intervention of the Virgin. The next chapter, still about the same theme, opens with apologies in prose for keeping to the same theme and proposes to enliven the account by using verses.<sup>67</sup> Another example is *Diva*

---

immediately after the death of Archduke Albert, on the explicit wish of his widow. Cf. BBr III, pp. 1012–1013; Kronenburg J.A.F., *Maria's Heerlijkheid in Nederland* (note 14) 430–31.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. the opening lines of this chapter: 'So far I have described to you the miracles of one day and one month; would you also care to hear about those miracles excerpted from the annals of one year? Let us hear, but only a selection, that is, a few out of many and always carefully chosen. So this is what happened in the year 1443' ('Dici et mensis unius dedi: an lubet anni etiam excerpta audire? Audiamus, sed excerpta; id est, e pluribus pauca et iudicio semper eligenda. Anno igitur ∞.CCCC.XLIII haec evenere'). Another example of his care to avoid endless repetitions can be found in *Div. Sich.*, chap. 22, where he put together a number of cases of hernia.

<sup>66</sup> They are listed in Papy J., 'La poésie de Juste Lipse. Esquisse d'une évaluation critique de sa technique poétique', in *Juste Lipse (1547–1606) en son temps (Colloque de Strasbourg, 1994)*, ed. C. Mouchel (Paris: 1996) 163–214 (esp. 201–204; 210–11, the latter adding the metre as well). The date of the first poem, however, *Ode ad Divam Hallensem* (= no. 113) should be changed in 1601, as it was written shortly after Lipsius's first visit to Halle (cf. *Div. Hal.*, p. 2, chap. 1).

<sup>67</sup> 'Ergo non rem, sed stilum tamen mutabo et vertam', cf. *Div. Hal.*, pp. 37–38.

*Lovaniensis*, chapter 16, where Lipsius begins with a eulogy in hendecasyllables on his place of birth, before switching to prose and report the miraculous healing of a woman possessed by an evil spirit.

Almost every account starts in a similar way, by giving specific, objective information about the cured person: geographical situation, name and the one of the father or partner, social position and/or profession (in the case of adults), and (approximative) age, once again an attempt to underline the credibility of what is told. For the present reader these lines are an interesting source with regard to social history. Regularly the geographical names are explained by a brief historical excursion, undoubtedly a complement from Lipsius to the official reports. These names are, of course, supposed to impress the reader by showing that the reputation of the Virgin had fanned out all over Brabant and even far across its borders. Next follows the description of the infliction, often with details about its duration, its seriousness, the helplessness of physicians, and occasionally even a vain pilgrimage to other places of worship.<sup>68</sup> The victim will either think of the possible support of the Virgin by him/herself, or be reminded and admonished by friends and relatives. In some cases the Virgin appears in a dream. The miraculous healing usually happens in front of the altar, but can also occur at home or on the place where the misfortune happened—for instance in cases of accidents with carts or drownings—always accompanied by prayers and vows of a pilgrimage made by either the victim or his/her companions. The *Diva Lovaniensis* mentions, for instance, how a blind boy from Herent (on a few miles distance from Leuven), on his way to implore the Virgin's help, was gradually recovering his sight from the moment he passed the town's gate; upon reaching the church his sight had become flawless.<sup>69</sup> There are also examples where the patient is cured after his limbs or eyes were touched by the Virgin in his/her dream.<sup>70</sup> People on the verge of drowning suddenly became

---

<sup>68</sup> Cf., for instance, one of the most famous early miracles in Scherpenheuvel about a young woman from Lille, Catharina Bus, who, after several attempts of exorcism in other places, was finally cured in Scherpenheuvel. Cf. *Div. Sich.*, chap. 41; Numan, *Historie vande miraculen*, 182–190 and Duerloo L. – Wingers M., *Scherpenheuvel* (note 4) 62.

<sup>69</sup> *Div. Lov.* chap. 6, seventh miracle.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. *Div. Sich.*, chap. 39 about a deaf man, who was also suffering from attacks of migraine.

aware of a hand supporting them until help arrived.<sup>71</sup> In some cases the miracle was a reward for having faithfully prayed a number of Hail Marys every day.<sup>72</sup> Whenever the miracle occurred, other people were present: relatives, companions, helpers, the crowds in the church . . . Several times, particularly in the *Diva Hallensis*, a religious person or a magistrate, was among the eyewitnesses. Afterwards masses are said; candles, ex votoes or votive tables are brought to the altar. The *Diva Lovaniensis* gives a warning that these promises should be kept: when the mother of a still-born child, which was revived, forgot about her pilgrimage, the poor baby was afflicted by a rupture and suffered terrible pains, until its mother remembered her vow and went to Leuven.

Because Lipsius's description offers only a selection with the intention of presenting as wide a variety of miracles as possible, it is impossible to establish proper proportions between the different types. The wonders most frequently occurring are that lame or paralysed people can walk away unhindered, that a long lasting blindness or a case of epilepsy is cured, dumb people can speak again, and evil spirits are chased. Nonetheless, there still is a striking number of cases concerning youngsters, often still-born or drowned, in the *Diva Hallensis*, a reminder that the Virgin of Halle was especially invoked with regard to children and also implored by women, who wanted to get pregnant.<sup>73</sup> The decrees of the Tridentine Council, however, had brought along an obvious change: most wonders now deal with physical or mental healing, as in the Bible, whereas only few examples are attested of persons unexpectedly freed from prison or surviving an accident, a fire, a shipwreck. It is, of course, much easier to bring forward conclusive evidence of the first category: relatives and neighbours can give testimony of the previous condition, physicians might have examined the patient . . .; the second category is more circumstantial. Whereas the *Diva Hallensis* and the *Diva Lovaniensis* still have several almost parallel accounts of captives in remote corners

---

<sup>71</sup> See, for instance, *Div. Sich.*, chap. 24, where a pregnant woman is carried away by the water towards a mill; thanks to the Virgin's intervention the water wheel stops turning and the woman manages to keep afloat, until her husband finds her half an hour later. Another example is *Div. Lov.*, chap. 21, entitled 'A girl openly supported above the water in a well'.

<sup>72</sup> Cf., for instance, *Div. Lov.*, chap. 18 and 19.

<sup>73</sup> The Archdukes too paid her a visit at least once a year.

of France, who were liberated from their prison<sup>74</sup>—an imitation of St Peter in *Vulg. Act.* 12, 3–11—or of the protection of a soldier both during battle and afterwards,<sup>75</sup> there are no such testimonies in the *Diva Aspricollis*. Here cases of apoplexy, paralysis and hernia predominate.

The final chapter of the three treatises, written in prose and in verses, is a combination of the feats of the Virgin and praying. The *Diva Hallensis* ends with the poem in iambic trimeters in which Lipsius dedicated his silver pen to the statue; the *Diva Sichemiensis* concludes with a poem written in Sapphic stanzas imploring the Virgin to continue her favours and have mercy upon a country nearly succumbing under the burden of war.<sup>76</sup> The *Diva Lovaniensis* gives a catalogue of the attested miracles and ends with a quotation from Bernardus of Clairvaux and three hendecasyllables.

### *Reception of the Diva Virgo Treatises*<sup>77</sup>

It has already been pointed out that Lipsius's treatises were either highly praised or met with severe criticism, even derision and scorn, especially the *Diva Hallensis*. Once more Lipsius's correspondence is a good source of information. Among the first to congratulate him with his first Virgin treatise was papal nuncio Ottavio Mirto Frangipani, who also underlined the importance of the work: although an account of the events, unusual as they were, was spread by rumours, more people in far-away countries would now be able to hear about it.<sup>78</sup> In the following months a few of Lipsius's acquaintances apparently

<sup>74</sup> *Div. Hal.*, chap. 23 ('Captivus in ultima Gallia e carcere ad instar Divi Petri eductus'), to be compared with *Div. Lov.*, chap. 17 and chap. 19.

<sup>75</sup> *Div. Hal.*, chap. 29 ('Multiplex tutela cuiusdam militaris viri in pugna et post pugnam'), to be compared with *Div. Lov.*, chap. 19.

<sup>76</sup> This is a reference to chap. 5, about the statue of the Virgin sweating blood.

<sup>77</sup> Protestant criticism is discussed more extensively in a paper 'Protestant Reaction on Lipsius's Holy Virgin Treatises' presented at the conference *Inside Out and Outside In: A New Look at the 17th-Century Republic of Letters* (Centre for Early Modern Studies, University of Aberdeen) and will be published in its *Acta*.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. ILE XVII, 04 09 26; Tournoy G. – Peeters H., *Five Rediscovered Letters of Ottavio Frangipani to Justus Lipsius, and the Reworking of a Letter by Lipsius*, in: R. de Smet – H. Melaerts – C. Saerens (eds.), *Studia varia Bruxellensia*, 4: *In honorem Aloysi Gerlo* (Leuven: 1997) 247–57 (esp. 253).

agreed to combine congratulations and admonitions to write a sequel about the miracles in Scherpenheuvel.<sup>79</sup> Meanwhile the copies sent to Italy had arrived and Lipsius was congratulated by Claudio Acquaviva, general of the Jesuits, Cardinal Cinzio Aldobrandini, nephew of Pope Clement VIII; Johannes Andreas Prochnicius, representant of the Bishop of Silesia in Naples, and Cardinal Carolus Emmanuel Pius of Savoy.<sup>80</sup>

While the *Diva Sichemiensis* was at the printer's the first reactions from Holland arrived. Balthasar Moretus was outraged by a few epigrams poking fun at the *Diva Hallensis*, written by Lipsius's successor in Leiden, Josephus Justus Scaliger, and Moretus's cousin Franciscus Raphelengius.<sup>81</sup> On the occasion of the Frankfurt spring bookfair Albert van Oosterwijck published a Dutch translation, which was, in fact, a pretence to slate the original and to ridicule the Catholic belief in miracles, as is made clear by its subtitle.<sup>82</sup> This scathing criticism was vented in the 'adhortation and preface to the Christian', the marginal annotations and the 'appendix of ridiculous miracles'.<sup>83</sup> At about the same time an anonymous *Dissertatio de idolo Hallensi, Iusti Lipsii mangonio et phaleris exornato atque producto* was circulating in the German Empire; it was shaped as a dialogue between a Christian and a papist. Balthasar Moretus did his utmost to have the author

<sup>79</sup> Scil. Oliverius Manaraeus, Philip Numan, Nicolaas Oudaert, Johannes Miraeus and Petrus Pantinus, dean of the Brussels cathedral (cf. resp. ILE XVII, 04 09 29 M; 04 10 05; 04 10 06; 04 10 18; 04 11 14).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. resp. ILE XVII, 04 10 30 and Sacré D., 'An Unknown and Unpublished Letter from Claudio Acquaviva' (note 34); ILE 04 12 11 A; 04 12 11 P; [04] 12 25 S.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. ILE XVIII, 05 02 01 and 05 02 05; see also Sacré D., 'Balthasar I Moretus en Justus Lipsius', in R. Dusoier – J. De Landtsheer – D. Imhof (eds.), *Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) en het Plantijnse Huis*, Publicaties van het Museum Plantin-Moretus en het Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, 37 (Antwerp: 1997) 109–28 (esp. 114–15). Still in February Lipsius had received a letter from Dominicus Baudius in Leiden urging him not to believe the rumour that Scaliger was the author of the poems (cf. Lipsius's answer in ILE XVIII, 05 02 08 B; Baudius repeated his apology of Scaliger in ILE XVIII, 05 04 04 B); a few weeks later Scaliger too denied that he had anything to do with the epigrams (ILE XVIII, 05 02 25, and again ILE XVIII, 05 03 24).

<sup>82</sup> Scil. *I[usti] Lipsii Heylige Maghet van Halle. Hare weldaden ende Miraculen ghetrouwelick ende ordentlick uitgheschreven. Uut de Latijnsche in onse Nederlantsche tale overgeset deur eenen Lief-hebber ter eere sijns eenigen Salichmakers tot bespottinghe der Pauslicke Roomsche Afgoderije*. [. . .], printed by Bruyn Harmansz. Schinkel in Delft (cf. BBr III, 981–82). It is first mentioned in ILE XVIII, 05 04 06 to the Jesuit Johannes Walterius Wiringus.

<sup>83</sup> An article focusing on Lipsius's *Diva Hallensis* and Van Oosterwijck's *Heylige Maghet* is forthcoming in *Trajecta*.

identified—a German? a Frenchman?—via the bookfair in Frankfurt, and via his contacts in Paris and Leiden.<sup>84</sup>

Lipsius refused to enter the lists against his attackers, except for a brief reply against Van Oosterwijck, *Reiectiuncula sannionis cuiusdam Batavi*, added at the end of the *Diva Sichemiensis*, between the *approbatio* and the privilege of Emperor Rudolph II (f. [I 4r]–K 1v). But others sharpened their quill in his place. The theologian Anastasius Cochelet, a Carmelite, wrote a dialogue between Lipsius and a *palaestrita* (director of a wrestling-school), countering point by point the attack of the *Dissertatio de idolo Hallensi*.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, Philip Numan was asked to make a proper Dutch translation. Lipsius agreed, advising him casually not to keep too close to the Latin text, since each language had its own genius. Yet he had his doubts whether Numan would find the time to translate his *Diva Hallensis* and, indeed, the Dutch translation was only issued in 1607.<sup>86</sup> In the meantime Louis du Gardin de Mortaigne, a physician from Enghien, had sent his French translation to Lipsius, expressing his admiration and explaining that he wanted the treatise to be at the disposal of his fellow-citizens, who for the major part did not understand Latin.<sup>87</sup>

Despite the criticism Johannes Moretus had to reimpress the work twice in 1605: 1550 copies in-quarto and 1500 in-octavo.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, amidst the controversies the *Diva Sichemiensis* was issued. Here too, within one year three issues of 1550 copies each came from the press, two in-quarto (1605 and 1606) and one in-octavo at the end of 1605. The first preserved congratulatory letter seems to be from

<sup>84</sup> Cf. ILE XVIII, 05 04 10. The author turned out to be Petrus Denaisius (Denais) (Strasbourg: 1560 – Heidelberg: 1610), who represented the Count Palatine at the Imperial Chamber of Speyer. It was immediately translated into Dutch. Neither the original nor the Dutch version have a printer's address.

<sup>85</sup> *Palaestrita honoris D. Hallensis. Pro Iusto Lipsio adversus dissertationem mentiti idoli Hallensis anonymi cuiusdam haeretici* (Antwerp: Johannes Baptista Vrintius, 1607). Cochelet's refutation was reimpressed three times in Latin; it was also translated into French and Dutch (each with a reprint) and into German.

<sup>86</sup> ILE XVIII, 05 04 09; *Die Heylighe Maghet van Halle. Door Justus Lipsius Hare wel-daden ende Mirakelen oordentlijck ende ghetrouwelijck beschreven* (Brussels: Rutger Velpius for Jeroen Verdussen [Antwerp], 1607). In his own preface Numan launched an attack against Van Oosterwijck. See BBr III, pp. 982–83.

<sup>87</sup> Scil. *La Nostre Dame de Hau. Ses Bienfaits et Miracles fidelement recueillis et arrangez en bel ordre par le tres-docte Iustus Lipsius* [. . .] (Brussels: Rutger Velpius, 1605), cf. ILE XVIII, [05 06 00]. See BBr III, pp. 977–78. Lipsius approved his translation in ILE XVIII, 05 06 10.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Moretus's sales catalogue, Antwerp, MPM, ms. 39, 18v.

Marcus Welser in Augsburg, who also expressed his appreciation of the appendix against Van Oosterwijck.<sup>89</sup> The Jesuit Aegidius Schoon-  
donck too applauded Lipsius for both his *Virgo* treatises.<sup>90</sup> As the  
director of the English College in Douai he was well-placed to warn  
him that the English could not appreciate his *Virgin* treatises.

And indeed, shortly after Lipsius's death the Scotsman Georges  
Thomson, professor at St Andrew's, published his *Vindex veritatis adver-*  
*sus Iustum Lipsium duo*, the first part against his ideas on the relation  
between religion and state, and on fate, the second specifically against  
the 'pseudo-virgin of Zichem, the idol of Scherpenheuvel, the wooden  
goddess, whose miracles he uproots'.<sup>91</sup> Thomson hid behind the pseu-  
donym Agricola Thracius. Still the same year Claudius Dausqueius  
became the vindicator of both the Virgin of Scherpenheuvel and  
Lipsius with his *D. Mariae Aspricollis qaumatouvgou Scutum. Lipsi Scutum*  
*ab eodem Cl. Dausqueio, utrumque adversus Agricolae Thracii Satyricas Petitiones*,  
presented as a dialogue between himself and Thomson.<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless,  
in spite of Protestant criticism the *Diva Sichemiensis* remained suc-  
cessful in Catholic countries. Besides the reprints of the Latin text,  
a French translation 'by one of the professors at the Jesuit College  
of Tournon' appeared in Tournon in 1615.<sup>93</sup> In later years Lipsius's  
second *Virgin* treatise inspired Andreas von Streithagen to write his  
*De Diva Virgine Aspricollis Libri* (Cologne, 1622) in elegiac distichs; the  
edition by Erycius Puteanus has already been mentioned before. In  
the thoroughly reworked and completed version *Iusti Lipsi Sapientiae*  
*et Litterarum Antistitis Fama postuma* (Antwerp, 1613) too, several authors  
showed once more their appreciation of Lipsius's Marial writings.

<sup>89</sup> ILE XVIII, 05 06 22.

<sup>90</sup> ILE 05 07 07.

<sup>91</sup> Scil. 'posterior ψευδοπαρθένου Sichemiensis, id est idoli Aspricollensis et Deae  
ligneae, miracula convellit' (London: 1606). Cf. Duerloo L. – Wingens M., *Scherpenheuvel*  
(note 4) 38.

<sup>92</sup> The dedicatory letter to Archduke Albert is dated 1 May 1606; it only came from  
the press in 1616 (Douai: Johannes Bogardus). Cf. De Backer A. – Sommervogel C.,  
*Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 12 vols (Brussels: 1890–1932) II, 1842–43.

<sup>93</sup> *Histoire miraculeuse de Notre Dame de Sichem ou Mont-aigu en Brabant. Escripte en*  
*Latin par Iuste Lipse*. In appendix is given a survey of the miracles which occurred  
in cult places with Virgin statues, cut from the oak of Scherpenheuvel, and par-  
ticularly in Tournon. The translator might be the Jesuit Pierre Reboul, who signed  
a dedicatory letter. Cf. BBr III, 1013–1014.

*Conclusion*

That especially Lipsius's Virgin treatises provoked such heated reactions in non-Catholic countries must be considered as a consequence of his 'abrupt' departure from Leiden in March 1591. The University Board had only granted him a few months' leave to cure his health in a German health resort, yet Lipsius used the opportunity to prepare his return to the Southern Netherlands, although he had given his word to come back to Leiden. The fact that hardly a decade later Lipsius of all people became the mouthpiece of the Counter-Reformation in the South tore open old sores in the Northern Provinces. In the South, on the other hand, theologians, and the Jesuits in particular, were only too ready to take up the defence of 'their Lipsius' and his Holy Virgin treatises against any attacks from 'heretics'. That the Leuven humanist died soon afterwards gave them every occasion to boost their portrait of Lipsius as the faithful, devoted servant of the Church of Rome and even to claim him as the paladin of the Catholic camp, without paying too much attention to his merits as a scholar—philologist, ancient historian and philosopher—which had earned him a reputation throughout Europe. Consequently, scholars in Protestant areas also composed their biased version, belittling Lipsius's merits as a humanist author and depicting him as an unreliable, faithless opportunist, swinging with the wind, who had become the poor, hapless puppet of the Jesuits.<sup>94</sup> When the whole body of Lipsius's correspondence will be available in a few more years, it might be an opportunity to rewrite his biography in a more objective and serene way, and put the discussion about his religious ideas in the right perspective.

---

<sup>94</sup> See, for instance, the Preface of Petrus Burmannus's *Sylloge*.

*Selective Bibliography*

- DUERLOO L., “*Pietas Albertina*. Dynastieke vroomheid en herbouw van het vorstelijk gezag”, *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 112 (1997) 1–18.
- — — THOMAS W. (eds.), *Albert and Isabella. The Promise of a Golden Age* (Brussels: 1998).
- — — WINGENS M., *Scherpenheuvel. Het Jeruzalem van de Lage Landen* (Leuven: 2002).
- ESSEN L. VAN DER, *Notre-Dame de St-Pierre (Louvain) ‘Siège de la Sagesse’ (1129–1927)* (Leuven: [1927]).
- FEINE H.E., *Kirchliche Rechtsgeschichte. Die katholische Kirche* (Köln-Graz: 1964<sup>4</sup>).
- HARLINE C. – PUT E., *A Bishop’s Tale. Matthias Hovius Among his Flock in Seventeenth-Century Flanders* (New Haven-London: 2000).
- HERWAARDEN J. VAN, “Geloof en geloofsuitingen in de late middeleeuwen in de Nederlanden: Jerusalembedevoarten, lijdendevotie en kruiswegverering”, *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 98 (1983) 400–29.
- HEYMBACH B., *Diva Lovaniensis seu mira beneficia a Deiparente ad aram sibi sacram in aede D. Petri immortalibus impetrata libri III* (Leuven: 1665).
- Histoire des Miracles. Actes de la 6<sup>ème</sup> Rencontre d’histoire religieuse* (Fontevraud, 8–9 oct. 1982), ed. J. de Viguerie (Antwerp: 1983).
- IMHOF D., “The Illustrations of Works by Justus Lipsius published by the Plantin Press”, in G. Tournoy – J. De Landtsheer – J. Papy (eds.), *Justus Lipsius, Europae Lumen et Column. Proceedings of the International Colloquium Leuven-Antwerp 17–20 September 1997*, Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia 15 (Leuven: 1999) 67–81.
- KRONENBURG J.A.F., *Maria’s Heerlijkheid in Nederland. Geschiedkundige schets van de Vereering der H. Maagd in ons Vaderland, van de vroegste tijden tot op onze dagen, 7: Afdwaling en Bestrijding, Trouw en Verdediging. Gedeeltelijk 16<sup>e</sup> en 17<sup>e</sup> eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1911).
- LANDTSHEER J. DE, “*Justi Lipsi Diva Lovaniensis*: an unknown treatise on Louvain’s *Sedes Sapientiae*”, *Revue d’Histoire Ecclésiastique* 92 (1997) 135–42.
- LIPSIUS J., *Diva Sichemiensis sive Aspricollis. Nova eius Beneficia et Admiranda* (Antwerp: 1605).
- — —, *Diva Virgo Hallensis. Beneficia eius et Miracula fide atque ordine descripta* (Antwerp: 1604).
- MAERE R., “La Statue de Notre-Dame de Louvain, *Sedes Sapientiae*”, in *Mémoires et Rapports du Congrès marial* (Brussels: 1921) 2, 495–504.
- MIRAEUS A., *Vita sive Elogium Iusti Lipsi Sapientiae et Litterarum Antistitis* (Antwerp: David Martinius, 1609).
- SACRÉ D., “An Unknown and Unpublished Letter from Claudio Acquaviva, SJ, to Justus Lipsius (1604) (with some other unpublished Letters)”, *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 51 (2002) 259–72.
- THIJS A.K.L., “De Contrareformatie en het economisch transformatieproces te Antwerpen na 1585”, *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 70 (1987) 97–124.
- UYTVEN R. VAN, “De ‘*Sedes Sapientiae*’ en Leuvense stadsprocessies in de 14<sup>e</sup> en de 15<sup>e</sup> eeuw” in G. HUYBENS – P. REEKMAN (eds.), *Jubileumboek. Jaarboek van de Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring voor Leuven en omgeving* 40 (Leuven: 2002) 83–91.
- VOGLER B., “La Réforme et le concept de miracle au XVI<sup>ème</sup> siècle”, *Revue d’Histoire de la Spiritualité. Revue d’ascétique et de mystique* 48 (1972) 145–50.
- WICHMANS A., *Brabantia Mariana Tripartita* (Antwerp: Ioannes Cnobbaert, 1632).
- WINGENS M., *Over de grens. De bedevaart van katholieke Nederlanders in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* (Nijmegen: 1994).

## THE RELIGIOUS POSITION OF ABRAHAM ORTELIUS

Jason Harris

In 1588, three years after Farnese reconquered Antwerp for Spain, the town council investigated Abraham Ortelius' religious affiliations as part of their post-conquest purge of the citizen guard. The Privy Council wrote to the town council asking whether, during the latest purge, Ortelius had been listed as a Lutheran, whether he had been disarmed, and whether he was still considered to be a heretic. The municipal authorities replied that Ortelius had never been recorded as a Lutheran and had always behaved in an orthodox Catholic manner. However, they admitted that in January 1586 Ortelius had indeed been asked to surrender his weapons as part of the purge, but that the error was quickly discovered and his equipment returned. The initial error was accounted for by the fact that Ortelius' close friendship with Peter Heyns, a Calvinist member of the revolutionary municipality, had cast suspicion upon him. Ultimately, no charge was brought. Ortelius' gifts to influential members of the Privy Council perhaps helped to secure his position.<sup>1</sup>

Yet Ortelius' religious beliefs have undergone more recent scrutiny. During the collation and editing of the documents of the Dutch exiles' Church in London in the late nineteenth century, J.H. Hessels discovered a letter to Ortelius from the French Hebraist Guillaume Postel. In a postscript, the writer requests, 'Greet our Plantin and tell him that the leaders of the School of Charity are not unknown to me'. The phrase 'scholae charitatis' was taken to be a reference to the secretive mystical sect, The Family of Love, confirming the opinion of Max Rooses, then curator of the Museum Plantin-Moretus, that the famous printer and his friend Ortelius were both members of the group.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Boumans R., "Was Abraham Ortelius katholiek of protestant?", *Handelingen der Zuidnederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal- en Letterkunde en Geschiedenis* 6 (1952) 109–27; Roey J. van, "De 'zuivering' van de Antwerpse gewapende gilden na de val van de stad (17–8–1585)", *Taxandria* 57 (1985) 99–206.

<sup>2</sup> 'Saluta Plantinum nostrum, et dicas illi scholae charitatis summos alumnos mihi

In a brief but influential article in 1952, René Boumans brought these pieces of evidence together with the other known material relating to Ortelius' religious beliefs. His analysis was terse but acute, attempting to bring clarity to the seventy years of debate since Hessels and Rooses stated their position.<sup>3</sup> He argued that Ortelius was brought up with a leaning towards reform but never became a Protestant, and although initiated into the secrets of Hendrik Niclaes' Family of Love (and sympathetic to the group), for reasons of safety he maintained all appearances of being Catholic. In summary, Ortelius' personal beliefs inclined him towards a general Christianity, unaligned with any particular group. Boumans was a skilled religious historian familiar with the complexity of religious allegiance and affiliation in sixteenth century Antwerp, but his study was seminal rather than definitive. Subsequent developments in the historiography of the Family of Love have complicated the picture. Studies by Herman de la Fontaine Verwey and Alastair Hamilton have detailed the development of splits within the group, its economic connections, and its appeal to learned humanists in the Low Countries. The number of identified members around Ortelius increased dramatically, particularly in the wake of Rekers' controversial study of Benito Arias Montano, the renowned humanist who was for a time an influential advisor to Philip II. Claims for the influence of the Family of Love in England have also become more wide-ranging, as have analyses of the professional and cultural networks linking the Low Countries with England. In the early 1980s, three fine book-length studies appeared, synthesising, popularising and pushing forward these developments: Alastair Hamilton's nuanced work, *The Family of Love*, Jean

---

non esse ignotos': Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii (geographi Antverpiensis) et virorum eruditiorum ad eundem et ad Jacobum Ortelianum (Abrahami Ortelii sororis filium) epistolulae cum aliquot aliis epistulis et tractatibus quibusdam ab utroque collectis (1524–1628) ex autographis mandante ecclesia Londino-Batavae*, (reprint) (Osnabrück: 1969) no. 20. Rooses M., "Ortelius et Plantin: note communiqué à M. P. Génard", *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Géographie d'Anvers* 5 (1880), 350–56.

<sup>3</sup> Boumans R., "Was Abraham Ortelius katholiek of protestant?" (note 1). Towards the end of the nineteenth century a consensus formed that Ortelius was a Familist: see Rooses M., "Ortelius et Plantin" (note 2); Génard P., "La généalogie du géographe Abraham Ortelius", *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie d'Anvers*, 5 (1880) 312–56; Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] Epistolae* (note 2) xxiv; and Wauwermans H., *Histoire de l'école cartographique belge et anversoise du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Brussels: 1895). However, Ortelius' orthodoxy was asserted by Ortroy F. van, "L'école cartographique belge au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle" (offprint in Plantin-Moretus Museum, Antwerp) and Denucé J., *Oud-Nederlandsche Kaartmakers in betrekking met Plantijn* (Antwerp: 1912–13).

Dietz Moss' *'Godded with God': Hendrik Niclaes and his Family of Love*, and Christopher Marsh's detailed monograph, *The Family of Love in English Society 1550–1630*. The Family of Love seemed familiar, and Ortelius' membership of it was widely assumed and frequently cited, despite notes of caution from some leading scholars.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the dissatisfaction of historians with the widespread claims for the influence of the Family of Love was given concrete form in Paul Valkema Blouw's sophisticated analysis of Christopher Plantin's connection with the group. Blouw showed that much of Plantin's connection with Hendrik Niclaes could be explained by commercial motives, and that his membership in, or adherence to the beliefs of, the group is not certain and is contradicted by some of the evidence.<sup>5</sup> However, Blouw's argument has not gained the support of the latest study of Ortelius' religious beliefs. Giorgio Mangani's elaborate study of the geographer's 'world' portrays a Familist milieu, *pace* Rekens and Hamilton, littered with the esoteric symbolism of arcane studies and eirenicism.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, the warnings of Blouw are not lightly set aside, particularly when evidence is thin on the ground, and Mangani's learned, thorough collation of material often appears little more than circumstantial evidence, partial or tendentious reading of the sources, or insensitivity to the distinctions between different kinds of unorthodox belief. It is also somewhat bedevilled by the common tendency among detectives of arcana to assume that all communication

---

<sup>4</sup> Boumans still had to rely on Nippold F., "Hendrik Niclaes und das Haus der Liebe", *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie* 32 (1862). For more recent scholarship see Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (Cambridge: 1981); id., "The Family of Love in Antwerp", *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 70 (1987) 87–96; id., "Hiël and the Hiëlists: The Doctrine and Followers of Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt", *Querendo* 7 (1977) 243–86; Fontaine Verwey H. de la, "Het Huis der Liefde en zijn publicaties", in: id., *Uit de wereld van het boek. I. Humanisten, dweppers en rebellen in de zestiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1975) 85–111; Moss J.D., *'Godded with God': Hendrik Niclaes and his Family of Love* (Philadelphia: 1981); Mout N., "The Family of Love (Huis der liefde) and the Dutch Revolt", in *Church and State since the Reformation*, 7 (The Hague: 1981) 76–93; Marsh C., *The Family of Love in English Society 1550–1630* (Cambridge: 1993). Note also Rekens B., *Benito Arias Montano (1527–1598)* (Groningen: 1961). For cross-channel connections see Dorsten J.A. van, *The Radical Arts. First Decade of an Elizabethan Renaissance* (Leiden: 1969); id., *Poets, Patrons and Professors* (Leiden: 1962); and Yates F., *The Valois Tapestries* (London: 1975).

<sup>5</sup> Valkema Blouw P., "Was Plantin a Member of the Family of Love? Notes on his Dealings with Hendrik Niclaes", *Querendo* 23 (1993) 3–23; and id., "Geheime activiteiten van Plantin, 1555–1583", *Gulden Passer* 73 (1995) 5–36.

<sup>6</sup> Mangani G., *Il "mondo" di Abramo Ortelio; Misticismo, geografia e collezionismo nel Rinascimento dei Paesi Bassi* (Ferrara: 1998).

on esoteric matters was mutual. Mangani concludes that Ortelius can best be understood through the late Familist teachings of Barrefelt, combined with something taken to be Christian Stoicism; however, his work has yet to receive due attention from Ortelius scholars. Most experts in the history of cartography still refer to Ortelius' connection with the Family of Love as probable, though not fully understood. By contrast, wider historical literature continues to assume his full-blown membership of the group. This is taken to indicate that Ortelius' religious beliefs were dominated by the heretical teachings of Nicolaes and/or Barrefelt, and that his moral stance tended towards eirenic disregard for post-reformation politics.<sup>7</sup>

In this article I discuss the evidence for Ortelius' association with the Family of Love before proceeding to assess the remaining evidence for his religious position. I assume that religious belief, affiliation and practice can change over time and that these changes often reflect social and political, as well as religious, developments. I also assume that individuals, no matter how intelligent, can have inconsistencies in character and belief, and different modes of behaviour in different circumstances, whether consciously or not. Thus, I intend to depict the religious position in which Ortelius put or found himself, and from which he proceeded to act, at the various points for which there is evidence, without assuming from the outset that each instance must be interpreted in terms of his life pattern. Only towards the end will I attempt to see whether a holistic interpretation of his religious character is possible.

The Family of Love, also variously referred to as the House of Love, the Service of Love, the Consort of Charity and the School of Charity, was a secret religious society founded by Hendrik Nicolaes in the early 1540s. Despite the secrecy of its membership, the printed works of its leaders have survived, and there exists a chronicle of the group's activities written by an elder within the society.<sup>8</sup> It is

---

<sup>7</sup> For a selection of the latest scholarship see Broecke M.P.R. van den – Krogt P. van der – Meurer P. (eds.), *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas: Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of His Death, 1598–1998*; Cockshaw P. – Nave F. de (eds.), *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598), cartograaf en humanist* (Turnhout: 1998). Note also Koeman C., *Abraham Ortelius* (Lausanne: 1964); and Imhof D. (ed.), *Abraham Ortelius: De wereld in kaart en de eerste atlas* (Antwerp: 1998); Meskens A., “Liaisons dangereuses: Peter Heyns en Abraham Ortelius”, *De Gulden Passer* 76–77 (1998–99) 95–108.

<sup>8</sup> Hamilton A. (ed.), *Cronica. Ordo Sacerdotis. Acta HN* (Documenta anabaptistica Neerlandica 6) (Leiden: 1988).

important to be sensitive to changes over time in the ideas within the group. The core of Hendrik Niclaes' beliefs was the actual presence of the spirit of Christ within the believer, who was thereafter described as 'godded with God'. By leading a pious life focused on inward fusion with the unity of God, Familist adepts were to pave the way to a new era in which Church sacraments would be unnecessary and all would unite in the service of love. Niclaes swayed between tolerance of all creeds and expressions of damnation for those who refused to accept his ideas. Followers were encouraged to observe traditional ceremonies for the sake of peaceable existence until the inevitable removal of these rites in a society regulated by the single rule of love. Such a dismissal of the value of established churches evoked the loathing of both religious and political authorities, as did the apparent hypocrisy of the group's policy of secrecy.

In the early 1570s a split occurred within the group with the secession of a number of the most senior elders who objected to the hierarchies Hendrik Niclaes had gradually imposed. In particular, Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt, objected to Niclaes' posturing as a prophet and his exhortations to members to follow his rule above and beyond that of Christ. In his teaching, Barrefelt emphasised self-knowledge, piety, and a pacific outlook, re-inforcing the willingness to dissimulate of Familism, encouraging tolerance, and displaying a more democratic understanding of the relationships between those 'godded with God'. He styled himself as their guide rather than their leader. This approach seems to have appealed greatly to the learned humanists in the Low Countries who were disillusioned with the factionalism within organised religions, and the endless disputes, persecutions and wars over inessential details of theology.<sup>9</sup>

An added complication to the picture is that it is not clear to what extent the variant teachings of Barrefelt were part of the Family of Love prior to the split in 1573. The *Chronicle of the Family of Love*, written at a later date and heavily biased against those who broke from Niclaes in 1573, states that Barrefelt was sent to Antwerp on behalf of Niclaes in the 1550s, shortly before the printer Christopher Plantin became involved with the group. The *Chronicle* also claims that it was around this time that the group began to flourish in the

---

<sup>9</sup> See Hamilton A., "Hiël and the Hiëlists" (note 4) 243–86; Fontaine Verwey H. de la, "Trois hérésiarques dans les Pays-Bas du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle", *BHR* 16 (1945) 312–30.

city, and thus it is possible that Barrefelt helped to shape the distinct character of Antwerp Familism.<sup>10</sup> Alastair Hamilton has claimed that Plantin's beliefs, expressed in 1567, pre-figure the ideas at the core of Barrefelt's later split with Niclaes—that he does not recognise the absolute authority of Niclaes, and that this democratic ecclesiology made the Antwerp group of Familists distinct from elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> However, there is very little evidence to confirm this assertion, and it is not clear why Plantin may be taken as typical of a learned humanist response in Antwerp. In 1555/6 he was newly arrived from France and had begun printing for colleagues in Paris, when he received a lucrative commission from Hendrik Niclaes. The Familist Chronicle makes the exaggerated claim that Plantin owed the establishment of his business to this contract, and used the opportunity of his liason with the Family of Love to learn Dutch. The Chronicle also suggests that he was valued by Niclaes for his contacts in Paris, not in Antwerp.<sup>12</sup> Thus, although Plantin belonged to a circle of learned humanists by the time he made the remarks that Hamilton analyses, any dealings he might have with the Family of Love would have been qualitatively different from those of his learned fellow citizens.

Many of Ortelius' friends and correspondents have been associated with the Family of Love aside from Plantin. These include Benito Arias Montanus, Justus Lipsius, Luis Pérez, Arnold Mylius, Emanuel van Meteren, Jacob Colius (the last two were both relatives of Ortelius), and the Dutch writer Dirk Volckertszoon Coornhert.<sup>13</sup> In some of these cases there is uncertainty; indeed, in the course of this article it will become evident that identifications may be simply erroneous. Nonetheless, within the wider, less intimate circle of acquaintances and correspondents who appear throughout Ortelius'

---

<sup>10</sup> Hamilton A. (ed.), *Cronica* (note 8) 44–46.

<sup>11</sup> Hamilton A., "The Family of Love in Antwerp" (note 4) 90–91.

<sup>12</sup> See Valkema Blouw P., "Was Plantin a Member of the Family of Love?" (note 5) 12–17; Hamilton A. (ed.), *Cronica* (note 8) 46.

<sup>13</sup> The most expansive claims with regard to the influence of Familism and its membership can be found in Rekers B., *Benito Arias Montano* (note 4). A more conservative assessment was given by Voet L., *The Golden Compasses. A History and Evaluation of the Printing and Publishing Activities of the Officina Plantiniana at Antwerp*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: 1969–72), which remains a standard work on Antwerp humanism. Familist theology is best analysed by Hamilton, who also discusses with acuity many of the questionable instances of membership; see Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4).

life the traces of the Family of Love seem to be clear and frequent. What then of Ortelius himself?

The main basis for the association of Ortelius with the Family of Love is the existence of some letters to him from the French scholar, Guillaume Postel, which appear to take for granted the fact that Ortelius is a member of the group. A scholar of biblical languages, Guillaume Postel's expertise and perpetual travelling brought him into contact with many religious and linguistic scholars across Europe. For a while he enjoyed considerable favour at the French court, which brought him the opportunity to spend a year in the Ottoman Empire. He drew upon his experiences there to construct the first ever work of comparative linguistics. He also became increasingly interested in cabbala and Islam. In 1543 he published his book *Of World Concord*, which conveyed his newly found internationalism and eirenic hopes for the peace of the church. He joined the Jesuits briefly, but was expelled when he began to express his ideas. Then, in a life-changing experience, he met a woman in Venice who, he believed, was an incarnation of the Holy Spirit. Shortly after Christmas, 1551, he had a mystical experience during which he felt this woman's spirit take possession of him. Thereafter, Postel devoted his life to an active ministry, believing in his own messianic calling to save the world. He travelled throughout Europe during this period, attracting universal admiration for his learning, associating with millenarian and mystical sects of various persuasions. Despite publishing a number of works, including a study of cosmography patronised by the Emperor Ferdinand, he remained for the most part pitifully poor. However, he attracted considerable attention and following in France in the early 1560s, resulting in his arrest in 1562, charged with political agitation. Postel had come to believe in the need for French world dominance to bring about the salvation of mankind, a doctrine that caused considerable embarrassment for French international diplomacy. After a brief period of freedom, he was again confined, this time for life in the Priory of St Martin in Paris; a sympathetic court deemed him insane rather than allowing him to be executed for heresy. He lived in confinement for eighteen years, until his death in 1581. He never altered his beliefs, and, as we shall see, attempted to continue his ministry by means of correspondence with pious men of learning throughout Europe.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> For Postel see Bouwsma W.J., *Concordia mundi: The career & thought of Guillaume*

The relationship between Ortelius and Postel can only be tentatively reconstructed on the basis of limited evidence. There are three known letters from Postel to Ortelius; no replies are extant.<sup>15</sup> While a number of Ortelius' maps draw upon the ideas of Postel, Ortelius seems to have viewed his atlas as a compendium of authoritative information and notable opinions, rather than as an expression of his own beliefs about individual cases or issues.<sup>16</sup> Quoting Postel did not necessarily mean he agreed with him; rather, it is an indication that Postel's reputation for learning had reached Antwerp along with his books, and that there were few others who provided information to question or replace many of his suggestions, particularly with regard to religious-historical geography. Thus, to gauge the relationship between the two men, scholars have relied upon what can be surmised from the nature of the matters discussed in Postel's letters, supplemented occasionally by reference to the correspondence between Christopher Plantin and Postel.<sup>17</sup>

The first extant letter from Postel to Ortelius is dated 9 April, 1567. In it, Postel thanks Ortelius for sending a copy of his new wall map of Asia, and for referring to him on it. He claims that there is great similarity in their work, and proceeds to discuss topical issues in the production of maps and geographical accounts. This leads him to observe the greed with which exploration and publication is often carried out, particularly, so he claims, by Celtic peoples. He cites various authorities to support this claim, and goes on to distinguish the importance of genuine cartography and cosmography from the practice of those who merely seek fame without understanding. This is a criticism of the mercantile and imperial goals of the Spanish and Portuguese, which is common among intellectual cartographers and cosmographers of the time. He praises the work

---

*Postel (1510–81)* (Harvard: 1957); and Secret F. (ed.), *Postelliana* (Bibliotheca Humanistica & Reformatorica 33) (Nieuwkoop: 1981).

<sup>15</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) nos 19, 20 and 81.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 196; and note the text of A. Ortelius, "Eryn. Hiberniae, Britannicae Insulae, Nova Descriptio" in *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1573).

<sup>17</sup> Spies M., "Humanist conceptions of the far North in the works of Mercator and Ortelius", in Broecke M.P.R. van den – Krogt P. van der – Meurer P., *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas* (note 7) 303–318. The same author dramatises well the reception of Postel's books in Antwerp; see Spies M., *Arctic Routes to Fabled Lands—Olivier Brunel and the Passage to China and Cathay in the Sixteenth Century* (Amsterdam: 1997) 76–82.

of Ortelius and his predecessor, Gemma Frisius, in helping to determine accurately the longitude and latitude of the earth; this is deemed essential in order to establish that Jerusalem is the central point on both meridians and thus of the earth. Postel's language is that of speculative mysticism, and his thread of argument (though obscure) seems to suggest that the geographical labours of Ortelius share a spiritual purpose and value with his own studies of geography and cosmic forces. He concludes, generously, by pointing out errors in Ortelius' map of Asia.<sup>18</sup>

It is difficult to know in what way, or to what extent, Ortelius would have understood this letter. It does not contain anything specifically heretical, but its language and logic are clearly eccentric. It is not clear whether the two men had previously met, though they seem to have known of each other's works. That Ortelius had sent Postel a gift of his wall map does not necessarily indicate familiarity; he often used such gifts as a way to introduce himself to potential collaborators or patrons.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Postel may not have known Ortelius from anything other than this gift. His association of Ortelius with Gemma Frisius is both misinformed and inappropriate—Ortelius was not engaged in the kind of mathematical cosmology that could be useful to establish anything about longitude, though he did assiduously scrutinise the contradictory claims of different maps during the preparation of his atlas.<sup>20</sup> Postel's description of Ortelius' cosmological interests seems far more applicable to his own interests in divine cosmology, synthesising arcane knowledge from Arabic, Jewish and Christian sources to establish the order of the universe. It may be that Ortelius did not reply to the letter, as, two weeks later, Postel wrote again seeking a response, or at least confirmation that the previous letter had been received. It is possible that Ortelius simply had not yet taken the time to reply, not perceiving Postel's sense of urgency, or that his reply was lost or delayed.

Postel's subsequent letter, written on 24 April, 1567, apologises for interrupting Ortelius, who is said to be busy with his cosmographical labours; the interruption is justified 'by the law of our

<sup>18</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 19.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., nos 30, 35, 40, 42, 44, 52, 75, 162, etc.

<sup>20</sup> Meskens A., "De wereld op het platte vlak: wiskundige cartografie ten tijde van Abraham Ortelius", in Cockshaw P. – Nave F. de (eds.), *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598)* (note 7) 70–82; Koeman C., *Abraham Ortelius* (note 7).

friendship', but this is standard humanist language and need not imply actual depth of familiarity, or indeed any at all. Postel's purpose in writing is to request information about the progress of the wars in the Low Countries, especially in Antwerp and Valenciennes. He wants an account of events since 1 January, which he says is equivalent to 13 December in the Dutch calendar, leading him to comment on the true nature of the divine calendar. Consideration of the divine calendar is crucial, he says, in order for him to establish whether the Dutch wars may be an action of God or Nature, or rather of Satan. He comments on how these matters are to be assessed, drawing on platonic, alchemical and cabbalistic images. He then concludes, 'these things will be enigmatic to you if you do not grasp them, clear if you do, revealing the origin of this new time that is beginning this year'.<sup>21</sup> Postel has, indeed, expressed himself enigmatically; notably, this time he seems concerned as to whether Ortelius will understand him. In a postscript, he asks whether Ortelius received his previous letter. He says that this is a matter of some concern, 'for with regard to it I have been elevated by Divine Providence [. . .] so that although I may appear the most foolish of men, nonetheless it would not be useful to the republic of letters if the least fragment or letter of my writings were to be lost'.<sup>22</sup> He explains himself by describing the succession of divine revelation down to himself. He concludes, 'I wanted to add this to you Ortelius, most dear child and brother in Christ, so that you might not wonder if you do not understand at once everything that is written to you'.<sup>23</sup> Again, Postel does not expect Ortelius to grasp his ideas fully. The ideas he expresses are typical of his own idiosyncratic belief system, which is not Familist, and of which Ortelius seems not to be an adept.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, we have just seen that Postel is not expressing Familist ideas, rather ideas drawn from his own sense of messianic ministry, involving

<sup>21</sup> 'Haec aenigmatacae, si non capis, clare si capis, tibi, temporis novi, hoc anno incipientis, originem patefacient': Hessels J.H., *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 20.

<sup>22</sup> 'In eo enim gradu sum a Divina constitutus Providentia [. . .] ut licet sum stultissimus virorum, tamen non expediat republicae ullum meorum scriptorum fragmentum aut epistolium perire' (ibid., no. 20).

<sup>23</sup> 'Hoc volui tibi superaddere Orтели fili et frater in Christo charissime, ut non mireris si statim non omnia capis quae ad te sunt scripta' (ibid., no. 20).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., no. 20. For Postel's ideas, see Bouwsma W.J., *Concordia mundi* (note 14).

a highly sophisticated theology that synthesises Jewish, Arabic and Christian religious traditions in an extremely personal manner. Postel proceeds in his postscript to Ortelius, 'Greet our Plantin and say to him that the leaders of the school of charity are not unknown to me'.<sup>25</sup> This is the sentence upon which has rested much of the association of Ortelius with the Family of Love—surely Postel would not ask Ortelius to forward such a sensitive message to Plantin unless he knew both men to be members of the Family of Love?<sup>26</sup>

Postel adds two clarifications. First, although he is not permitted any sacrament with any society of men, nonetheless, he says, he has explained in a former publication whom he esteems among the reformers. This is a reference to his book *De Originibus* (1553), in which, however, he is far from clear about this very matter. He says, rather generally, that he likes all those who consider all of humanity to be one body, the Church of Christ; he dislikes anyone who thinks that his sect alone contains the truth and Christ.<sup>27</sup> As a second clarification of his message to Plantin, Postel singles out David Joris for condemnation, but says 'nonetheless I will recognise and follow all sacred practices of the consort of charity that they have so abused'.<sup>28</sup> David Joris was a leader of a mystical sect that acquired a considerable following in the 1540s.<sup>29</sup> Postel had encountered the group in Basle and, after showing some initial interest, decided, as we can see, strongly against the 'pretensions' of the sect's leader. Joris may have had some influence on the ideas of Hendrik Niclaes, their ideas having many similarities, and the two men were often mentioned together by contemporaries and later writers.<sup>30</sup> Thus, Postel seems to be offering cautious support for the Family of Love, with the caveat that he wants nothing to do with followers of Joris. He seems to be testing the water, trying to provoke a clear statement from the

---

<sup>25</sup> 'Salua nostrum Plantinum, et dicas illi scholae charitatis summos alumnos mihi non esse ignotos (ibid., no. 20).

<sup>26</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 20.

<sup>27</sup> Postel G., *De Originibus* (Basle: 1553).

<sup>28</sup> 'Tamen veritates omnes sacras quibus impie sunt abusi me in consortii charitatis usum, nosse et servare' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* [note 2] no. 20).

<sup>29</sup> Bainton R.H., *David Joris. Wiedertäufer und Kämpfer für Toleranz im 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: 1937); Williams G.H., *The Radical Reformation* (London: 1962) 582–88 and 724–31.

<sup>30</sup> Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 17–23; Williams G.H., *The Radical Reformation* (note 29) 724–31.

Family about its attitude to Joris. Postel's message does not express allegiance. It attempts to open a dialogue, challenging Plantin to confirm his association with the Family of Love and to respond to Postel's scruples.

We know that Ortelius forwarded the message to Plantin because the latter then wrote to Postel on 17 May, 1567.<sup>31</sup> It is not pertinent here to enter the debate about the interpretation of Plantin's reply and the correspondence that it engendered. Suffice it to say that it has long been taken for proof of Plantin's membership of the Family of Love. On the other hand, Valkema Blouw has given a convincing alternative account of Plantin's relationship with Hendrik Niclaes, and I think the evidence for membership contained in these letters is certainly not entirely clear.<sup>32</sup> However, it is clear that Plantin finds it extremely difficult to understand Postel's intentions, and eventually disclaims his own role as a mediator, suggesting that if Postel wants to debate with the Family of Love he should come to Antwerp to do so with Hendrik Niclaes in person. Plantin becomes extremely frustrated with the enigmatic and tendentious arguments of Postel, who exploits the ambiguity of the phrase 'consort of charity', and others like it, to evoke further curiosity and discussion from Plantin.<sup>33</sup> The word 'charity' has had a rich and complicated history in Christian tradition, acquiring a number of divergent significations, particularly in mystical theologies. Postel had been using the word with a highly personalised meaning for a number of years prior to his contacts with Familism, and thus his enigmatic comments about the 'service of charity' were far from clear to Plantin. The ambiguity is, I think, deliberate—an attempt to engage interest and dialogue. Postel never joined the Family of Love and seems never to have had any intention of doing so. Rather, he tried to win the group over to his way of thinking so that they could further his cause while he was confined under house arrest in Paris.

Postel's belief that he was an incarnation of the Holy Spirit with a messianic mission for the salvation of mankind and the restoration of peace and order in the world seems to have led him to take

---

<sup>31</sup> Rooses M. – Denucé J., *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, 9 vols. (Antwerp: 1883–1918) I, 80–81.

<sup>32</sup> See Valkema Blouw P., "Was Plantin a Member of the Family of Love?" (note 5).

<sup>33</sup> Rooses M. – Denucé J., *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin* (note 31) I, 154–55.

an interest in the Family of Love as a possible means that could be converted to his cause. Plantin was his approach to the Family, and Ortelius was his approach to Plantin; but what does this tell us about Postel's view of Ortelius?

In a letter to Plantin written on 25 May, 1567, Postel adds a post-script to the following effect:

Having little leisure at present, I will write to our Ortelius, of whom I do not know if he understands French, another time. Greet him in the language that he understands and tell him that I would like to go to Antwerp to see you both. I will also write to our friend through him, Mylius, at the first opportunity, so that he will know.<sup>34</sup>

If this sounds like a Familist network, it is misleading. Postel has still had no response from Ortelius, is not sure whether he would understand French or, perhaps, more generally his language (proof that they had not met?), but has not lost confidence in his initial assessment of the man. The reference to Arnold Mylius, here, is further evidence that Postel is contacting people with whom he is only remotely acquainted: as there is no evidence of familiarity between Postel and Ortelius, still less can there be familiarity between Postel and Mylius if they are only friends through Ortelius. Postel's confident, familiar tone is an attempt to induce friendship, not a reflection of one already in existence; he is grasping at straws and trying not to acknowledge his isolation, both physical and spiritual. Thus, on 31 July 1567, Plantin wrote to Postel, 'Sir, I have received and read the latest letters you have sent to me; it seems to me that they are not at all responsive to mine and contain nothing which concerns me.'<sup>35</sup>

There is a third extant letter from Postel to Ortelius—written twelve years later, in 1579. While his motivations and intentions are embedded in the obscurity of his thought, it seems that he wished for Ortelius to take up his mantle as the incarnate spirit of Christ. Postel claims in his letter that the Ortelius' atlas, the *Theatrum*, is the most important book since the Bible, believing that it was published for the good of the entire human race, published so that Ortelius

---

<sup>34</sup> 'Ayant peu de loysir à present, une aultre foyz j'escriré à nostre amy Ortelius, lequel je ne sçay si il entend valon. Vous le salurés en la langue qu'il entend et luy dirés que je désire pour avec vous le veoir aller en vostre ville d'Antwerpen. J'escriray aussi à nostre par luy amy Mylius, à la première occasion, pour ce qu'il sçait' (ibid., 154–55).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

might descend within himself and return to drive away evil—that this bears no relation to Ortelius' own view of his atlas will appear later. Postel claims that his name, 'Postel', signifies 'dew-spreader' in Hebrew and that 'Ortelius' in Hebrew means 'light of the dew'—thus Ortelius is to illuminate the message that Postel has spread. As before, he asks Ortelius to ensure that his letter is not lost; this time he also requests that it be published for the good of humanity.<sup>36</sup> Needless to say, Ortelius did not do so. Nor is there any evidence of a reply to this letter. Indeed, there is no way of knowing what Ortelius thought about it, though he certainly never accepted the messianic role in which Postel cast him. Although Ortelius kept these letters from Postel, this does not mean that he agreed with anything in them. Perhaps the risk involved in keeping such letters, which could be judged heretical material, suggests that Ortelius must have placed some value in them, but they cannot be used to assess Ortelius' own beliefs about himself or about his atlas. Postel's assumptions about both are enmeshed in his idiosyncratic view of the universe. What prompted him to approach Ortelius is open to speculation, but even if the answer were to be known it would almost certainly tell us more about Postel than about Ortelius.

It should be reiterated that Ortelius and Plantin both had good reason other than religious affiliation to cultivate the proffered friendship of Postel, who was, irrespective of his religious convictions, a highly respected scholar. He assisted Plantin with the preparation of an edition of the Bible in four languages—Hebrew, Chaldean and Greek, with a Latin translation. Plantin even publicised Postel's contribution in order to promote the work, though this eventually came back to haunt him when the Bible gained an ill reception. Ortelius, too, had much to gain from a scholar who could advise him as to the geography of the Holy Lands, ancient and modern. Postel had had access to Ottoman geographical information and possessed the philological skills to answer some of the problems of etymology that beset Ortelius' studies of toponymy. Further, he had written about cosmography, and his early more sober, if still abstruse, integration of this with eirenic religious concerns might well have received favourable attention in Antwerp's religiously curious geographical circles. If one wanted to guess at the Ortelius' attitude to Postel, it

---

<sup>36</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 81.

may have been similar to the opinion expressed by his friend Plantin in a postscript that he added when forwarding a letter from Postel to the influential Spaniard Gabriel Cayas. Plantin, seeking patronage for his Bible project, describes Postel in the following manner: 'Which man, even if he is considered a dreamer, seems to discuss many ingenious and not always vain matters in his works.'<sup>37</sup>

So far it has only been possible to show that the letters from Postel to Ortelius, in the absence of any extant replies, do not provide strong evidence for Ortelius' being a member of the Family of Love. On the other hand, Ortelius did pass on the message about this group to his friend Plantin. Further, many of his closest friends and colleagues are among those who have been named as Familists by twentieth-century historians. It is well beyond the scope of this paper to deal with the entire friendship circle case by case. Though there may be room for doubt in several instances, I will assume that some of Ortelius' friends were closely associated with the Family of Love. For example, it is known that whether or not Plantin was a member of the sect, he had contact with the group throughout his professional career, printing many of their works anonymously despite the considerable risk this involved and irrespective of whether his motives were religious or economic. The question is in what way the presence of Familism within Ortelius' friendship circle can be used to implicate Ortelius himself. Therefore, before going on to introduce further evidence concerning Ortelius' possible relation with the Family of Love, it is appropriate to discuss briefly the category of evidence by association—that is, circumstantial evidence.

It is well urged that in the case of a secretive group such as the Family of Love circumstantial evidence must be taken very seriously as the closest one is likely to come to concrete proof of individual membership. However, direct evidence is not always as difficult to come by as is sometimes claimed. The case of Christopher Plantin has already been mentioned; it has been possible to reconstruct in detail his business relations with the Family of Love, and indeed one of his letters to Hendrik Niclaes has survived.<sup>38</sup> In the case of the

<sup>37</sup> 'Qui vir, etiam si fantasticus habeatur, multa certe ingeniosa neque semper vana tractare videtur in suis operibus' (Rooses M. – Denucé J., *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin* [note 31] I, 192).

<sup>38</sup> Rooses M., "Ortelius et Plantin" (note 2); Valkema Blouw P., "Was Plantin a

renowned humanist Justus Lipsius there exists a first-hand account of a colleague who regularly saw him in the company of Barrefelt showing considerable respect for the advice of the man who was then the leader of the Family.<sup>39</sup> Even if the evidence in these cases were as compelling as is sometimes assumed, no similar evidence exists for Ortelius. The only mention of the Family of Love in relation to him in any of the extant sources is that discussed above in the letter by Postel. Further, even if such an association did exist, the historian would be left with the tricky task of establishing what type of association it was. It is extremely important to consider the social embeddedness of a society such as the Family of Love. How could it gain new members? How did it meet? How secretive were the members and did they have other friends? How did members understand their relationship to the group? And, how did non-members understand their relationship to the group?

The first thing to bear in mind in this regard is that the Family of Love, as a group, may not have regarded itself as a sect or as an exclusive community. It was secretive out of practical necessity, not because of an elitist or minoritist ideology.<sup>40</sup> I have pointed out that a split occurred in the group during the time of Ortelius' alleged membership of it. This split was caused in part by the imposition of discipline, by which members of the group were required to observe more rigorously the teachings of Nicolaes.<sup>41</sup> One might therefore assume that prior to the split, as well as afterwards, many members did not perceive their membership as entailing adherence to a specific body of beliefs or practices. Such members may have regarded Nicolaes' writings, to his chagrin, as inspiration rather than doctrine. Indeed, there is even evidence that some of those who stayed with Nicolaes after the split in the Family were either ill-informed about,

---

Member of the Family of Love?" (note 5); Valkema Blouw P., "Geheime activiteiten van Plantin, 1555–1583" (note 5); Hamilton A. (ed.), *Cronica* (note 8) 46–49, 54–55, 70–73, 79 and 121–23. Rooses M. – Denucé J., *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin* (note 31) I, 157–60.

<sup>39</sup> Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 97–98; Mout N., "Heilige Lipsius, bid voor ons", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 97 (1984) 1, 55–64.

<sup>40</sup> Hamilton A., "The Family of Love in Antwerp" (note 4), favours the term 'movement' instead of sect, though he also sees an elitist mentality in the Antwerp Familists: id., "Hiël and the Hiëlists" (note 4) 272.

<sup>41</sup> Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 83–111; Hamilton A. (ed.), *Cronica* (note 8) 186–204.

or chose to re-interpret, key elements of his teachings.<sup>42</sup> Written in an elliptic style that makes Postel's prose seem lucid, Hendrik Niclaes' writings may never have been clearly understood by many of his followers. Thus, a group such as this cannot be assumed to be comprehensible through the doctrines of its leader, or leaders, as represented in published texts. In fact, many of the published works of Hendrik Niclaes are focused upon admonishments to discipline, which, given their repeated appearance, and on the basis of other evidence, seem not to have gained the intended response. Thus, the fact of membership of such a group, contrary to the hopes of historians with a longing for neat classification, is not in itself sufficient to describe the beliefs of an individual. The use of the word 'sect' in this instance might even be regarded as misleading. Prior to the split within the group, and afterwards in terms of the followers of Barrefelt, the Family of Love seems to have been a nexus of common interests, some more common than others.

If it is precarious to assume anything in general about the members of the Family of Love, still more is it difficult to describe those who were familiar with the society and its members, but never joined it. A number of different kinds of interaction are possible; a broad typology might read as follows:

Those sympathetic to the society but never interested in joining.

Those who considered joining but decided not to do so.

Those who never decided one way or the other.

Those friendly with members but with no interest in the religious society.

Those hostile to the society who never chose to expose it.

Those hostile to the society who did choose to expose it.

It is important to note that the last two categories can overlap with the first two. People change their minds over time; thus, someone once sympathetic to the society can become hostile to it, whether or not they decide to voice their opinion. Further, within each category the question of influence is complicated by issues of interpretation, appropriation and opposition.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, many historians

---

<sup>42</sup> For example, see Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 111. Note the discussion of doctrine and external relations in Marsh C., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 21–27.

<sup>43</sup> For an introduction to the use of some of these issues in religious history, see Frijhoff W., "Toeëigening: van bezitsdrang naar betekenisgeving", *Trajecta* 6 (1997) 2, 99–118.

in practice ignore the first five of these six categories. In fairness, this is often because of an awareness of the political sensitivity of any kind of connection to a heretical group. The government and Inquisition did not always choose to see the shades of grey that I have outlined. Having said that, on many occasions they did choose to do so. For example, prompted by the political imperatives of Farnese, for his first few years as Bishop of Antwerp after that city's return to Catholic control in 1585, Laevinus Torrentius pronounced a religious amnesty in which people were given the opportunity to consider their position and make up their mind to stay as Catholics or leave as Protestants. Aware that many were waiting to see how political events would turn out, he was prepared to extend that amnesty to 1589. If a Counter-Reformation bishop could be sensitive to the nuances and factors affecting religious affiliation, then it is important for historians to perceive similar degrees of gradation.<sup>44</sup>

What about Ortelius? It is clear that, like Plantin, he associated with members of the Family of Love, as he did with Calvinists, Catholics, and people with Anabaptist leanings. Given the mixed religious character of Antwerp, the increasing doctrinal and political divisions between confessions have to be set against the daily imperatives of trade, demography and social integration; it was not only Familists who transgressed boundaries when confessionalisation insisted on borders.<sup>45</sup> In such a situation, prosopography is not so much a map of allegiance as a maze of patterns in which the historian may see what he likes without knowing what he sees. A fixed point is needed to interpret the patterns.

Having reconsidered the evidence connecting Ortelius to the Family of Love, it is possible to take a fresh look at his own statements about religion. Numerous letters from his own hand exist, providing ample evidence of his religious outlook, and many of the details of his life

---

<sup>44</sup> Thijs A.K.L., *Van Geuzenstad tot Katholiek Bolwerk: Antwerpen en de Contrareformatie* (Turnhout: 1990), 34–40. For Torrentius, see Marinus M.J., *Laevinus Torrentius als tweede bisschop van Antwerpen (1587–1595)* (Brussels: 1995).

<sup>45</sup> The religious situation in Antwerp has been studied extensively; for the most recent analyses, see the superb work by Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis, 1550–1577* (Baltimore: 1996); and Thijs A.K.L., *Van Geuzenstad tot Katholiek Bolwerk* (note 44). The counter-imperative of integration has been studied by Kint A., *The Community of Commerce: Social Relations in Sixteenth-Century Antwerp* (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University: 1996).

contribute to the picture. The earliest information relating to his religious background comes in the form of an anecdote about his father and his uncle, Leonard Ortels and Jacob van Meteren. The latter is known to have been involved in the publication of the Coverdale Bible, perhaps with some assistance from Ortels, who was his brother-in-law. In 1535, while Van Meteren was in London, Ortels' house was searched for prohibited books by the Inquisition; the searchers narrowly missed discovering a chest full of such material.<sup>46</sup> No arrests were made. On his return from London, Van Meteren named his new child 'Emanuel' (the Lord is with us) as thanks for the fortunate escape. The prohibited books were almost certainly early Lutheran writings, and perhaps material used for the Bible translation. The deliberate significance in the choice of the name 'Emanuel' raises the question as to whether the Old-Testament name 'Abraham', chosen eight years previously, also reflects the family's interest in reforming ideas.

Prior to the death of his father in 1537, Ortelius received some education in Latin and Greek. Afterwards, he was brought up under the aegis of his uncle. What this might have entailed is difficult to ascertain. Van Meteren was often abroad for commercial, and perhaps religious, reasons. He sent his own son north to study, but Emanuel failed to develop a predilection for learning, instead taking up an apprenticeship with a cloth merchant, resulting in his eventual move to London.<sup>47</sup> By contrast, little is known about Ortelius at this stage, or about the business that he inherited from his father.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> Verduyn W.B., *Emanuel van Meteren: bijdrage tot de kennis van zijn leven, zijn tijd, en het ontstaan van zijn geschiedwerk* (The Hague: 1926), 24–36; Nevins J.L., "Emanuel van Meteren, 1535–1612", *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society* (London, 1952–1958) 128–145; Wauwermans H., "Abraham Ortelius", in: *Biographie nationale*, vol. 16 (Brussels: 1901) 291–332.

<sup>47</sup> Verduyn W.B., *Emanuel van Meteren* (note 46) 43.

<sup>48</sup> There is no full biography of Ortelius. Wauwermans H., "Abraham Ortelius" (note 46) and Génard P., "La généalogie du géographe Abraham Ortelius" (note 3) remain useful. More recently, see Koeman C., *Abraham Ortelius* (note 7) and Mangani G., *Il "mondo" di Abramo Ortelio* (note 6). Aside from Ortelius' publications, crucial sources include Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2); Puraye J. e.a. (ed.), *Album Amicorum Abraham Ortelius* (Amsterdam: 1969); and Denucé J., *Oud-Nederlandsche kaartmakers in betrekking met Plantijn* (Antwerp: 1912–13). For correspondence not included in Hessels' edition, see Depuydt J., "Le cercle d'amis et de correspondants autour d'Abraham Ortelius", in Cockshaw P. – Nave F. de (eds.), *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598)* (note 7) 117–40. Hereafter, I have provided references only for those details not included in the standard accounts.

This seems to have been based upon trading in antiquities and curiosities, including the sale of maps. This last was a lucrative trade, as more and more information poured in from the voyages of discovery, and probably began to form the mainstay of Ortelius' business. However, it was only in 1547 that he entered the guild of St Luke, as an 'afsetter van carten', perhaps indicating an expansion of his business enterprise, or the increasing control of the guild authorities.<sup>49</sup> While religious persecution in the Low Countries intensified in the 1540s, the authorities' attention had shifted to Anabaptism. From what is known of the social composition of this group, it seems unlikely that Ortelius would have belonged to its early members. A Lutheran community remained in Antwerp, following a policy of secrecy that earned harsh criticism from Luther but helped it to evade persecution, and subsequent historical analysis.<sup>50</sup> It is impossible to say whether Ortelius had, or was likely to have, much contact with this group, about which so little is known. If it can be assumed that the town secretary, Cornelius Grapheus, retained some interest in Lutheran reforms after his forced public recantation, then his familiarity with Ortelius might plausibly be counted significant.<sup>51</sup> It is clear that the Van Meteren family remained closely involved in the reformed community during its 'plastic phase', when confessional boundaries remained undetermined. Jacob van Meteren moved to London in 1550, but died shortly afterwards; his son, Emanuel, worked as the London factor of the Antwerp merchant, Sebastian Danckaerts, and became a distinguished member of the reformed London exiles church.<sup>52</sup> Ortelius travelled to England around 1551, perhaps on hearing of his uncle's death, and seems to have spent some time at Oxford University.<sup>53</sup> Whatever his own religious convictions at the time, his reliance upon family and the Dutch community in England would certainly have brought him into close contact with Protestantism, and the decision to visit a university there

---

<sup>49</sup> For the Guild of St Luke, see Stock J. van der, *Printing Images in Antwerp* (Rotterdam: 1998).

<sup>50</sup> Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation* (note 45) 80–82 and 101–103. See also, Pont W.J., *Geschiedenis van het Lutheranisme in de Nederlanden tot 1618* (Haarlem: 1911).

<sup>51</sup> Puraye J. e.a. (ed.), *Album Amicorum* (note 48) f. 35; Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 69.

<sup>52</sup> Verduyn W.B., *Emanuel van Meteren* (note 46) 20.

<sup>53</sup> Wood A., *Fasti Oxonienses* (London, 1813) i.134.

is striking, given that there is no evidence of similar involvement with local universities, despite the presence of a cartographic milieu around Frisius in Leuven.

Earlier in 1550, Ortelius had made his first known trip to the Frankfurt book fair, where he made the acquaintance of the bookseller Arnold Mylius. The purpose of this trip was presumably the purchase of foreign maps, which could then be coloured and re-sold in the Antwerp market. Ortelius' registration in the guild of St Luke for this purpose three years earlier would suggest that this might not have been his first trip to Frankfurt. If this suggestion is correct, it may explain a visit paid to Ortelius by the English scholar John Dee, also in 1550.<sup>54</sup> Dee may have heard of Ortelius through the network of cartographers and cosmologers around Frisius and Mercator, with whom Dee had been staying for some time; however, the earliest known meeting between Ortelius and Mercator is in 1554, again at the Frankfurt book fair. Alternatively, the connection might have come through the Antwerp Norbertine, Rhetius, who was a friend of Frisius.<sup>55</sup> However that may be, it is clear that Ortelius' business had already brought him into contact with scholars beyond the Antwerp metropolis, some of whom would remain friends throughout his life. As an educated dealer in the latest maps, with some knowledge of Greek, Ortelius was not just another merchant, but a person who might have held some interest to scholars in a range of disciplines.

While none of this suggests any particular religious orientation, it is an important background to the formation of a set of attitudes out of which Ortelius' later religious and political attitudes could develop. As the trading capital of northern Europe, Antwerp served as an entrepôt for information and ideas as well as exotic goods. The society in which Ortelius reached adulthood was cosmopolitan in mercantile, religious and political outlook. This brought both fragmentation of social life, which allowed religious non-conformity to develop and to hide, and political power to protect the merchant population from the punitive scrutiny of the central government and

---

<sup>54</sup> See Sherman W., *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst: 1995) 5.

<sup>55</sup> I am indebted to Prof. Jan Roegiers for this suggestion. For the connection between Rhetius and Frisius see *De Geleerde Wereld van Keizer Karel* (Leuven: 2000) 289–290.

Inquisition.<sup>56</sup> It is in this context that Ortelius began to develop the international friendship network that made his later collaborative scholarly enterprises possible and that embodied, perhaps brought forth, his disregard for confessional boundaries.

The first four known letters from Ortelius demonstrate his international outlook in the 1550s, and the extent to which this was embroiled in religious matters. All of these letters are written to his cousin in England, Emanuel van Meteren, and they are clearly only a small part of a much more extensive correspondence that has not survived, thus it is important to gauge the ways in which Ortelius' letters might have been shaped to the tastes of his reader.<sup>57</sup> While the Van Meteren family was certainly marked by reforming tendencies—and Emanuel was involved with the exiles church in London, eventually becoming an elder—his Protestantism must be placed under some scrutiny, not least because of his willingness and ability to remain in London during the reign of Mary. In 1561 he was excommunicated from the exiles church on account of his support for the minister Adriaan van Haemstede, whose lenient approach to Anabaptist elements in the congregation was regarded as unacceptable. It is tempting to speculate on the reasons behind the depth of Van Meteren's loyalty to Van Haemstede, who had previously become embroiled in conflict as minister to the Reformed congregation at Antwerp. The issue had been his 'salon' preaching to sympathisers who were unwilling, for social reasons, openly to leave the Catholic Church. In 1558, Van Haemstede insisted on preaching publicly, which action brought stricter persecution upon the Reformed community, making it difficult for some time to maintain the continuity of the congregation. While Van Haemstede's position as a Calvinist minister committed to proselytising and openly spreading the word makes it unlikely that he was among the earliest followers of the Family of Love, or a member of a similar group, his rejection of confessional exclusivity chimes well with the tolerant outlook later

---

<sup>56</sup> The most detailed account of Antwerp's economy is Wee H. van der, *The Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy (Fourteenth-Sixteenth Centuries)*, 3 vols. (The Hague: 1963). For the political stance of the city see Wells G.E., *Antwerp and the Government of Phillip II, 1555-1567* (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University: 1982). The social climate is thoroughly analysed by Kint A., *The Community of Commerce* (note 45); and Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation* (note 45).

<sup>57</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] Epistolae* (note 2) nos 6, 7, 8 & 9.

typical of Ortelius. That Van Meteren was one of the leading supporters of Van Haemstede in the early 1560s may suggest that his upbringing with Ortelius had granted them some similarity of outlook, albeit that Van Meteren's religious development was shaped by the prevalence of Protestantism in the Dutch merchant community in London.<sup>58</sup> A third character excommunicated during the London controversy, Jacobus Acontius, seems to have been connected to Ortelius, who introduced a friend to him five years later, in 1567. Acontius lived with Emanuel van Meteren for some time in London. His book, *Satanae Stratagemata* (1565), argued that confessionalisation was the devil's means to obscure the truths of Christianity. He recommended freedom from political involvement in religion, urging the notion of unconstrained communal debate out of which the pure teachings of Christ would emerge.<sup>59</sup> His association with Van Meteren and Ortelius may reveal something of their religious outlook at this point, but without further evidence it is impossible to draw firm conclusions.

The first letter from Ortelius to Van Meteren is written from the spring fair in Frankfurt in 1556. Ortelius, responding to Van Meteren's eagerness for news, reports the compromises that were struck to ensure the smooth coronation of Ferdinand as Emperor by avoiding offending the religious sensibilities of three of the secular electors. Ortelius does not express any attitude towards the events he reports, except to suggest that Ferdinand wished to consent to the compromises, rather than having been forced.<sup>60</sup> Likewise, it is difficult to gauge Ortelius' attitude to the news he reports in his next extant letter to Van Meteren, written on 25 October 1557. Again he has acquired his information while in Frankfurt, this time regarding the Colloquy at Worms. He describes the dispute among the Lutherans as to whether the Calvinists and Zwinglians should be declared sacramentarians and thus damned as heretics, reporting that Melanchthon argued against, while those from the new university at Jena were in favour and left in a rage when the proposition faced opposition.

---

<sup>58</sup> Verduyn W.B., *Emanuel van Meteren* (note 46) 79–98; Jelsma A.J., *Adriaan van Haemstede en zijn martelaarsboek* (The Hague: 1990) 28–77. Denis P., "Les frontières de la tolérance religieuse: le procès d'Adrien Cornelisz. Van Haemstede (1525–1562), défenseur des anabaptistes, à Londres en 1560", *LIAS* 6 (1979) 2, 189–97.

<sup>59</sup> O'Malley C.D., *Jacopo Acontio, Uomini e Dottrine* (Rome: 1955), 56–65.

<sup>60</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 6.

While Ortelius makes no explicit comment in this, or the previous, letter to express his own convictions, a tolerant outlook is suggested by his even-handed treatment of the affairs. The motto he adopts at the opening of the second letter, 'Virtuti fortuna comes', emphasises the personal religious significance he takes from these affairs, perhaps even a contrast between virtuous piety and religious controversy.<sup>61</sup>

The next two letters to Van Meteren were written in the second half of 1559. In the first, Ortelius reports on what he has seen during his recent trip to Paris. He provides his cousin with an account of the wedding of Philip II with Princess Elisabeth of France (the Duke of Alva acting as Philip's proxy), and he describes a commemorative medal that he bought. He also relates news that has followed his return to Antwerp, that the King of France has been gravely injured during a tourney. However, much of the letter is taken up with reports of religious persecution. He says that amid the celebrations of the Prince of Piedmont's wedding there was also sorrow for some because twelve councillors of the king were imprisoned on account of religion. Then, he gives a lengthy and detailed account of the threatened execution of about thirty nobles and learned men in Valladolid, also on account of religion. He describes the punishments of those who recanted, the constancy of others until they were about to ascend the scaffold, and the fate of one Dr Casallo, who refused to recant and was thus burned alive, after having to stand with his tongue pierced by iron from 5am to 6pm.<sup>62</sup> Although he adds no value judgments to his description of the event, the combination of dwelling upon the nature of the punishments and mentioning the respectable social background of the prisoners, without invoking any sense of the justness of the punishment or of the wisdom of God, conveys a sense of distaste for the events. This impression, though it is only an impression, is somewhat reinforced by the cautious reference to the sadness about the imprisonment of royal councillors for the same crime in France.

The next extant letter, written in September 1559, again opens with the motto, 'Virtuti fortuna comes'. Ortelius mentions the news from Spain that the Bishop of Toledo has been imprisoned by the Inquisition 'met groote macht.' Then, he describes in detail the events

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., no. 7.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., no. 8.

subsequent to the death of Pope Paul IV, when the Carafa family was expelled from Rome, the pope's statue was pulled down, and religious prisoners from the recent repression were released. Once more, Ortelius makes no direct comment; however, his sense of the portentousness of the events is clear. He affirms the reliability of the reports he has heard ('I saw this edict, which was printed in Rome, and I would have sent it to you if it were not too big') and concludes with what will become a standard phrase in his response to important news: 'What will come of it, we shall see with time.'<sup>63</sup>

What is remarkable about this and the previous letter is not that so little has been said about them, rather that the writer says so little.<sup>64</sup> Ortelius' reports are characteristically devoid of value judgments, and given the fragmentary nature of the extant correspondence any attempt to find significance in his selection of material is a precarious enterprise. Nevertheless, a number of qualified observations can be made. First, within these letters Ortelius is committed to giving detailed and accurate reports, but he also shows particular interest in violent actions. This is also clear from the next extant letter, his well-known account of the iconoclasm at Antwerp in August 1566.<sup>65</sup> However, this reflects the nature of reporting, as seen in printed material of the time, and presumably also reflects the sources from which Ortelius was drawing his information. Second, it is difficult to ascertain whether his lack of comment betrays fear of the letters being intercepted or confidence that his cousin would understand his attitude, rendering comment superfluous. Finally, if any factor unites Ortelius' interests in these disparate fragments of news-reportage, it is the political dimension of religion, be that in dispensing with tradition in the coronation of the new emperor, the in-fighting of Lutherans, the arrest and execution of supposed heretics, or the reaction of the Roman people to the death of a repressive pope and their attempts to influence the conclave thereafter. Whatever Ortelius' reasons for refraining from comment on these events, his reticence is striking and characteristic.

---

<sup>63</sup> 'Ick hebbe dit edict gesien, te Room gedrukt, hadde het niet te groot geweest ick soude het u oock gesonden hebben' and 'Watter wt comen sal, dat sullen wij metter tijt hooren' (ibid., no. 9).

<sup>64</sup> Some observations are made by Broecke M.P.R. van den, "Introduction to the Life and Works of Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598)", in Broecke M.P.R. van den – Krogt P. van der – Meurer P., *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas* (note 7) 40.

<sup>65</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 17.

In his letter to Emanuel van Meteren describing the iconoclasm at Antwerp, Ortelius shows his feelings somewhat more clearly. Once more, his account is detailed and there is little by way of commentary or evaluation; however, value judgments creep into the fabric of the narrative. He describes how 'several young lads [. . .] began to mock the virgin', how 'to these rogues now more and more people began to come.'<sup>66</sup> He says that it is remarkable that nobody intervened to prevent the iconoclasm, and that afterwards the churches looked as if 'de duijvel sommyge hondert iaeren huijs gehouden hadde.' Although he reports that Hermannus Modet denied the Calvinist consistories' role in the events, it is clear that Ortelius is not convinced, reporting that the iconoclasts chanted 'vive les jeux'. He also notes that 'There was a large amount stolen here, for while this was happening every whore and scoundrel took the chance to run through the church and carry away whatever they could find.' That Ortelius did not approve of the iconoclasm, or the way in which it was done, is not surprising; even many previously sympathetic to the Calvinists turned against them in the wake of the destruction caused. Although it is impossible to know whether Ortelius had belonged to the large crowds that attended the hedge-sermons over the course of the wonder year, his language in describing Modet's defence of 'synen oft hunder consistorien' would suggest that he was never close to the Calvinists.<sup>67</sup>

By the mid-1560s Ortelius was a recognised humanist and tradesman with contacts extending from Italy to England, and from Portugal and Spain to Germany. He was familiar with the practicalities of obviating the restrictions placed by the Inquisition on international trade and scholarship. He had already published wall maps of his own design, and had begun his project to compile the latest maps in one volume as a map-book that would comprehensively treat the whole world in a format that would be convenient, portable, and appropriate to the study of history. His known acquaintances at this stage almost all come from the world of printing; although this inevitably reflects the nature of the extant evidence, the intimacy of

---

<sup>66</sup> 'Sommijge ionge lackerkens [. . .] begonste mette lieve vrouw te gecken' and 'tot dese gujten begonste noch meer toevlucht van volck te comen' (ibid., no. 17).

<sup>67</sup> 'Hier is seer veel gestolen, die wyle dit geschieden heeft elck hoere ende boeve oorsaecke genomen na de kercke te loopen ende mede te dragen wat hij gevonden heeft' (ibid., no. 17).

Ortelius' familiarity with Arnold Mylius, and with printers and booksellers such as Silvius, Libertus Malcotius, De Jode and Plantin, is notable. The print houses of Antwerp were notorious centres for the dissemination of unorthodox and unfamiliar ideas. They were also places in which the humanist commitment to the international, non-confessional republic of letters was at its peak. Be it as businessmen or as scholars, these men had a vested interest in peace and freedom from faction. If the Family of Love commanded the interest in Antwerp that has been ascribed to it, it is very much within this context of synthetic intellectual and religious curiosity.<sup>68</sup>

I have already discussed the letters from Postel to Ortelius, and how I think they may be interpreted. Though they cannot be taken as evidence that Ortelius was a member of the Family of Love, they certainly do reveal his exposure to the ideas of Postel, from which he carefully selected material useful for his maps. The letters also reveal Postel's confidence in Ortelius as someone who could be approached about esoteric matters. It is difficult to know if this reveals anything reliable about his reputation within the republic of letters at the time.

Later in the same year, on 13 December 1567, Ortelius wrote again to his cousin in England. His reference to 'der catholicken evel, guesen cortse, ende hugenoten melisoen' is well known. Less often quoted is the subsequent commentary:

All this we have deserved through our sins, for we are up to our heads in pride and ambition, and everyone is out to seem good, but not to be good, and everybody wants to lecture others but not be humble, to know much and do little, to have command over others and not to bow under God's patient Hand with self-denial. May He be merciful to us and give us to see our sins.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> See Mout N., "The Family of Love" (note 4); Hamilton A., "The Family of Love in Antwerp" (note 4). For early evidence of Ortelius evading the strictures of the Inquisition see Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 10.

<sup>69</sup> 'Ende dit al om onser sonden wille daer wyt dit mede verdient hebben. Want ick sie dat wy in hooverdien ende eergiericheyt steecken totten hoofde toe, ende elck wt is om goet te heeten, ende niemant om goet te syne, ende alle eenen anderen willen leeren, ende niemant hem selven vernederen, veel weeten ende lutel doen, aller over de menschen heerscappie hebben, ende niemant hem onder Godts (met stervinge syns selfs) lydsamijge Handt buijgen. Hij wille ons genadich syn ende onse gebreecken geven te siene' (ibid., no. 23).

While this looks like a conventional expression of piety in a time of trouble, in fact its criticism of the vanity inherent in factionalism is quite specific. Ortelius' concerns over claims to spiritual authority, and his concomitant concern over the lack of importance granted to good works, make him an unlikely follower of the self-styled prophet Hendrik Niclaes, irrespective of their shared dislike for confessional politics.

There is a gap of seven years, including the period of Alva's rule in the Low Countries, before we come to Ortelius' next statements with regard to religion. However, sources other than correspondence supply some information about Ortelius' religious position at the time. Most striking is the evidence of his atlas, published in 1570. Dedicated to Philip II, the obvious sponsor of a work of such magnitude, it appears an entirely orthodox text that can have drawn little concern from the religious authorities.<sup>70</sup> However, compiled during the turbulent beginnings of the revolt in the Netherlands, and against the backdrop of continuing civil and religious war in France, it could not help but reflect the pacific outlook of its maker. The title page depicts an imperial Europa commanding an ordered world in which Christianity rules supreme, while the first map, of the world, shows the harmonious creation as an integrated whole, strikingly symmetrical in structure. At the foot of this map is a quotation from Cicero: 'What among human affairs can seem great to him who knows eternity and the whole of the universe?'<sup>71</sup> The idea of the folly and pettiness of man contrasted with the grandeur of the universe is developed in the text accompanying the map, which quotes from Pliny to criticise the small-minded avarice that drives human affairs into civil and religious strife through the inability to tolerate a neighbour.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> But see Mangani G., *Il "mondo" di Abramo Ortelio* (note 6) 234–74; and id., "La signification providentielle du *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*", in Cockshaw P. – Nave F. de (eds.), *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598)* (note 7) 93–104.

<sup>71</sup> 'Quid ei potest videri magnum in rebus humanis cui aeternitas omnis totiusque mundi nota sit magnitudo' (*Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*). On the title page see Waterschoot W., "The title-page of Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*", *Querendo* 9 (1979) 43–68; Shirley R., "The Title Pages to the *Theatrum* and *Parergon*", in Broecke M.P.R. van den – Krogt P. van der – Meurer P., *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas* (note 7) 161–64; and work forthcoming by Elisabeth Neumann. On the world map, see Shirley R., "The World Maps in the *Theatrum*", in Broecke M.P.R. van den – Krogt P. van der – Meurer P., *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas* (note 7) 171–84.

<sup>72</sup> See text accompanying the world map in Ortelius A., *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp: 1570).

Pliny's comments were sufficiently commonplace to evade censorship and in 1573 Ortelius was appointed geographer to the king, but the message was not lost on friends, who congratulated Ortelius on encompassing the world peacefully in his book before the Spanish could manage to do so by force of conquest.<sup>73</sup>

Subsequent to publication of the atlas, Ortelius' circle of friends included many individuals of doubtful orthodoxy, and still more of tolerant outlook, despite the recurrent legislation prohibiting all manifestations of heresy. The decision to enshrine these friendships in an album may well have stemmed from Ortelius' contacts with university graduates, among whom the fashion was widespread, but the specific motivation was probably in response to receiving the honorary title of geographer to the king in November 1573.<sup>74</sup> Although conferral of the award was one of the last acts of the Duke of Alva as Governor of the Low Countries, it was almost certainly prompted by the advocacy of Ortelius' friend, the Spanish humanist Benito Arias Montano. The contributors to the album come from a broad range of religious positions and it would be a mistake to attempt to draw a coherent religious message from their shared presence in the book over the course of the twenty-five years in which it was compiled. Nonetheless, the circle of friends around Ortelius and Plantin in Antwerp in 1573–4 was clearly inclined towards mystical, eirenic expressions of Christian belief. It is tempting to speculate that Ortelius' decision to collect an album of inscriptions from friends, celebrating friendship itself, represents a moment of optimism within the circle in response to the departure of Alva and the increasing influence of Arias Montano. If so, the album quickly changed in character, becoming a monument to learned friendships maintained during war.

Ortelius' next statements about religion come in the form of a letter of consolation that he wrote to his brother-in-law, Jacob Cool,

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, Ortelius, *Album Amicorum*, ff. 63, 83–84, 97–98.

<sup>74</sup> For the legal and intellectual attitude to tolerance see Güldner G., *Das Toleranz-Problem in den Niederlanden im Ausgang des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Lübeck – Hamburg: 1968); Berkvens-Stevelinck, Christiane, e.a. (ed.), *The Emergence of Tolerance in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: 1997); and Grell O.P. – Scribner R. (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge: 1996). For friendship albums see Klose W., *Corpus Alborum Amicorum* (Stuttgart: 1988); id. (ed.), *Stammbücher des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 42 (1989); and Thomassen K., *Alba Amicorum. Vijf eeuwen vriendschap op papier gezet: het album amicorum en het poëziealbum in de Nederlanden* (The Hague: 1990).

on 31 May 1574. Commiserating with his relative about recent bankruptcy, Ortelius gives a standard Christian-stoical assessment of the indifference of external goods. The letter is a prime example of the influence of stoical thought during the civil strife in France and the Low Countries throughout the second half of the century, but what is particularly significant with regard to religion is Ortelius' comment, 'What I call fortune or chance, you may call God or his sign. It is all the same to me.'<sup>75</sup> The relationship between fortune and providence is precisely the issue that later caused problems for Lipsius after publication of his *De Constantia*. It is unlikely that Ortelius here meant to express himself irreligiously, rather that he had little time for theological niceties that sought to quibble with the terms of a sound ethical point. His comments diverge further from the standard commonplaces of Christian asceticism by rejecting the value of all external goods, including friendship, not simply material acquisitions. This suggests a considered conviction rather than an inherited thought-pattern. It is possible that Ortelius' reference to God's 'segen' could be taken as an allusion to the Hiëlist emphasis on forensic soteriology, in which case this passage would suggest that he uses stoical language but is indifferent about the transposition of terms into a Familist vocabulary.<sup>76</sup> The implication would be that Ortelius was not a Familist, but was tolerant of the group. However, the word 'segen' is not limited to Familist usage, and within such usage it is not clear that it could overlap with Ortelius' use of the word 'fortuyne'. After adding that 'I do not reject anyone's industry, only his self-assurance', he concludes, 'Take this in good part, and I wish that you understood it as well as I think I do.'<sup>77</sup> Ortelius wrote these comments the day after Spanish mutineers had attained their goal of securing wage arrears of one million florins, having

---

<sup>75</sup> 'V L mach het gene dat ick hier de fortuyne oft geluck heete, God oft syn segen noemen. Het is mij alleleens' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii* [...] *Epistolae* [note 2] no. 50).

<sup>76</sup> For reference to the concept of the sign in Hiëlist doctrine see Hamilton A., "Hiël and the Hiëlists" (note 4) 256.

<sup>77</sup> 'Verworpe ick niemants neerstichtyt, dan alleen syn betrouwen' and 'V L nemet int goede, ende wilde wel dat sy so wel begripen conde als mij dunckt dat ick doe' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii* [...] *Epistolae* [note 2] no. 50). For the response to Lipsius' *De Constantia* see Hoven R., "De Constantia" in Imhof D. e.a. (ed.), *Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) en het Plantijnse Huis* (Antwerp: 1998) 75–81; Güldner G., *Das Toleranz-Problem in den Niederlanden* (note 74) 65–158.

held Antwerp to ransom for over six weeks.<sup>78</sup> His uncharacteristic tinge of self-righteousness may thus reflect a degree of distaste for the mutineers and his fellow citizens' response to them.

It is difficult to know how much Ortelius had suffered from the wars at this point, but in this letter he offers warm hospitality to his brother-in-law, and it seems he had profited well from the commercial success of his atlas. Certainly his prestige had increased greatly, which seems to have caused him some anxiety, as indicated by his note about caution in forming friendships, written on a letter of praise he received from Petrus Bizarus.<sup>79</sup> Whatever the specific context animating Ortelius' thoughts at this time, towards the end of his life he expressed similar stoical disregard for external goods in the motto he adopted, 'Contemno et orno, mente, manu', thus it may be regarded as typical of his religious outlook throughout life.

A gap of a decade intervenes before the extant sources contain any further concrete expression of Ortelius' religious position, but this does not make it impossible to find any pertinent evidence. Contacts with the English and perhaps curiosity about their voyages of exploration enticed Ortelius into making a trip to England for a few months in 1577, where he again demonstrated his ability to contract friendships with Protestants of various hues. Shortly after returning, he travelled through Germany to Italy, where he journeyed through Venice to Rome. Meanwhile, his friendship album followed a different course, being passed from Cologne to England, Antwerp, and elsewhere. Not only did Ortelius show total disregard for confessional boundaries in terms of his destinations and the people with whom he chose to associate, but also he evoked openness about religious matters from many and seems to have been regarded by all sides as their own.<sup>80</sup> It is worth emphasising that Ortelius' interests in these journeys were largely scholarly, indeed antiquarian, and that the preparation of his *Synonymia Geographica* must have been a prime concern. He travelled through the republic of letters as much as through the geo-religious politics of Europe, no doubt making his acceptance in each location considerably easier. News of events in the Low Countries followed him wherever he travelled, and correspondents

<sup>78</sup> Marnef G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation* (note 45) 9–10.

<sup>79</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 33.

<sup>80</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* (note 2) nos 68, 69, 71.

seem to have assumed that he was a supporter of the revolt. That they were broadly right is confirmed by his letters to the Leiden Professor, Vulcanius, in which he often refers to the Spanish forces as the enemy. Thus, on 31 December 1584, he wrote in the wake of the death of William of Orange:

I received the mournful ceremonial in my thankful hand with grateful memory of a dear prince. Several times I have wondered that your university at Leiden has not yet given a public testimony of sadness for the sake of the death of its great parent, Orange! Not even one small tear! Surely it is not forgetful of so many kindnesses? It seems to me that Pliny could have said appropriately about this what he once said about Rufus to his Albinus: 'There is only so much loyalty in friendships, as there is ready forgetfulness of deaths', along with what else he adds. When he was vulnerable they produced the Discourse (as they call it), but not a thing since he has died. Everybody says nothing. Surely not because they received no reward from the dead man?<sup>81</sup>

Support for the revolt did not entail any particular religious position, and it is not clear at what stage it engaged Ortelius' sympathies, or if he ever changed his mind. Interestingly, on 9 June 1593 he wrote to Vulcanius about the Dutch army, 'Our (as you say) army is outside Gertruidenberg.' On the same day he reported to Lipsius that, 'Ours are sticking to Gertruidenberg', which suggests that the qualified expression he used for Vulcanius may have been wistful or ironic.<sup>82</sup> What is clear is that Ortelius' sympathy for the revolt allowed him to associate with people like the rebel leader Philip Marnix and to support Plantin's decision to establish a press in Leiden.<sup>83</sup> However,

---

<sup>81</sup> 'Lugubrem pompam accepi. Gratiae memoriae grati principis gratum manus. Non semel mirror Academiam Lugdunensam vestram nullum hactenus dedisse, ob parentis sui optimi Auraici obitum, publicum doloris testimonium! Ne una lacrimula quidem! An immemor tot praestitorum beneficiorum? Videtur mihi Plinium recte posse dicere nunc de isto, quod olim de Rufo, ad suum Albinum: "Tam rara in amicitii fides, tam parata oblivio mortuorum", etc. quae addit. Cum vulnerabus fuerat, Discursus (ut vocant) edebantur. Cum neci datus sit, ne mi quidem. Omnes musitant. An quia nullam a mortuo premium?" (Leiden, *Cod. Vulc. 105, III*, letter dated 31.12.84). For the correspondence between Ortelius and Vulcanius see Dewitte A., "Abraham Ortelius en Bonaventura Vulcanius (1574–1598)", *De Gulden Passer* 63 (1985) 417–27.

<sup>82</sup> 'Exercitus noster (ut scribis) ante Gertrudebergam est' and 'Nostri ante Gertrudebergam haerent' (Leiden, *Cod. Vulc. 105, III*, letter dated 9.6.93); Gerlo A. – Landtsheer J. De (eds.), *Iusti Lipsii Epistolae*, 93.06.09 (Brussels: 1994).

<sup>83</sup> Ortelius, *Album Amicorum*, 39 (Leiden, *Cod. Vulc. 105, III*, letter dated 18.9.82).

Ortelius can never have been close enough to the supporters of the revolt to incriminate himself later, given his decision that it was safe to remain in Antwerp in 1585, and considering the confidence of the civic authorities in his faithfulness to Catholicism, irrespective of the measures he then took to secure himself. Further, the Antwerp entries in his friendship album during the years of Calvinist rule exhibit Ortelius' usual disregard for confessional boundaries. Nonetheless, as discussed earlier, Ortelius did face some scrutiny during the first years of the restored Catholic administration at Antwerp, and was concerned about the interruption of his correspondence.<sup>84</sup>

Ortelius escaped Antwerp before the fall of the city to Parma. He travelled first to the book fair at Frankfurt, where he met Plantin and journeyed on to Cologne. His return from Cologne into the arms of Torrentius in Liège, on hearing of the fall of Antwerp, might be taken as symbolic of his position thereafter.<sup>85</sup> Whether through force of circumstance or design, thereafter Ortelius drew closer to the Catholic authorities in the Spanish Netherlands, reinforcing his public image as an orthodox Catholic. The Antwerp to which he returned halved in population as all those who would not convert to Catholicism departed. Nonetheless, although his friendship with Peter Heyns, as stated earlier, had placed his religious position in doubt after the fall of Antwerp, he continued to maintain contact with Protestants in Leiden, London, Breslau and elsewhere.<sup>86</sup> Ortelius increasingly lived a double-life—outwardly a devout Catholic, inwardly cherishing learned contacts that crossed all religious boundaries, and despairing of the political-religious turmoil around him.

On 30 September 1588, in a letter to his brother-in-law in London, Ortelius wrote in sombre, repentant mood that the times were bad and that he did not expect them to improve, at least to human perception. He continued:

---

<sup>84</sup> Ortelius, *Album Amicorum*, passim; Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 144. The situation for Catholics under the Protestant administration is discussed by Andriessen J., "De katholieken te Antwerpen (1577–1585)", *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 70 (1987) 61–77.

<sup>85</sup> Clair C., *Christopher Plantin* (London: 1960) 158; Delcourt M. – Hoyoux J. (eds.), *Laevinus Torrentius Correspondance* (1950–54) vol. 3, nos 159 and 161.

<sup>86</sup> For the situation in Antwerp see Thijs A.K.L., *Van Geuzenstad tot Katholiek Bolwerk* (note 44) 9–33. Note that Ortelius maintained his connection with Heyns and his family after the investigation; see Meskens A., "Liaisons dangereuses" (note 7) 105–6.

Things will improve when men improve, because it is true, as the man said, 'to the good all things are good', for thus all the storms of the devil or men are not harmful to the good. Although we are not yet good, we at least wish that we were. Thus we are always like the poor shepherds to whom the peace was proclaimed because they were of good intentions.<sup>87</sup>

The poignant hope that the good shall find peace struggles out from a train of thought woven with metaphor. The notion that 'to the good all things are good' animates many perfectionist theories of regeneration, but Ortelius presents a picture of a society very gradually struggling with its sins, far from achieving regeneration.

The rebuilding of Antwerp and the renewal of Catholic worship in the Spanish Netherlands were related economic and cultural phenomena.<sup>88</sup> For Ortelius, the process was lucrative and lonely. Many of his friends had left Antwerp, or died; Plantin had returned, but died in 1589. A new circle of old colleagues and new acquaintances ensured that he was not actually alone: Torrentius, Lipsius, Schottus, Bochijs, and Sweerts all became increasingly close. However, Ortelius was an old man, frequently ill, albeit still active at work, and his letters to his nephew and heir, Ortelianus, repeatedly appeal for the latter to come to stay with him in Antwerp. Instead, Ortelianus behaved with increasing independence that frustrated Ortelius, who swung between pique, understanding, and even pathetic bribery. Thus, on 24 January 1598, again trying to convince his nephew to come to him, he wrote: 'I will add no more. You would marvel at the very thing that I despise. With this, farewell. I am not wordy, for I am dying day by day.'<sup>89</sup>

Nonetheless, Ortelius' position as mentor to his nephew led him to discuss matters of religion with apparent candour in his letters. The first extant example occurs in a letter written on 8 April 1592,

---

<sup>87</sup> 'Dan het sal beteren als haer de menschen beteren. Want ist waer, die daer seet *Den goeden is alle dingen goet*, so en connen allen de tempeesten der duyvelen oft menschen, den goeden geen quaet syn. Syn wy noch niet goedt, wy wilden ten minsten dat wyt waeren. So syn wy emmers onder het getal der slechter herderkens, die den vrede vercondicht werdt, om datse van goeden wille waeren' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* [note 2] no. 161).

<sup>88</sup> Thijs A.K.L., *Van Geuzenstad tot Katholiek Bokwerk* (note 44) 33–60; Thijs A., "De Contrareformatie en het economisch transformatieproces te Antwerpen na 1585", *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 70 (1987) 97–124.

<sup>89</sup> 'Nihil addo verborum. Rem ipsam mirareris. Eam ipsam quam ego contemno. His vale. Prolixus non sum. Morior enim in dies' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* [note 2] no. 314; note also nos 228, 229 and 303).

when Ortelianus was almost thirty. It is signed with Ortelius' anagrammatic pseudonym 'Bartholus Aramejus', probably reflecting the sensitivity of the matters treated. After discussing books he has sent and received, Ortelius responds to his nephew's criticisms of the works of the mystical writers, Tauler and Eschius:

I understand what you say about Tauler and Eschius. I do not deny that they are tainted with suspicion. To err is human. But next to those, who do not at all, as Horace says. I note from their writings that they are men of good intentions, and it was to such men that the angel first announced the Gospel. I also see that they write from the heart, not from books; the first is rare, the second most common, and not, I might add, inane, but rather most harmful, for from this so many troubles, past and present. So many crimes and barbarisms, and these all fortified with pretence of piety.<sup>90</sup>

Ortelius' defence of the mystics against more learned writers is not based on their authority from inspiration, rather on their good intentions. As before to Ortelianus' father, Ortelius uses the example of the revelation of the gospel to the shepherds to portray fallible but good humanity. His attack on learned writers who substitute cavilling for piety is typical of humanist religiosity, but the crimes and barbarisms to which he claims their writings lead surely reflect his experience of religious fanaticism rather than an objection to literary style. Like many humanists earlier in the century, he seems to regard the inward piety of mysticism as the appropriate path to peace and doctrinal debate as the origin of social discord.

---

<sup>90</sup> 'Quid sentias de Tauleri, Eshijque scriptis capio. Superstitionis macula [read maculam non] deesse illis non nego. Humanum est falli. At proximus illi, qui minime, ut inquit ille. [Horace] Bonae voluntatis hominum notas ex eorum scriptis tamen agnosco. Et tales elegerat angelus, quibus inter omnes mortales, primum evangelium annuntiabat. Video hos etiam potius ex animo, quam libris, scripsisse. Primum hoc rarum; altero nihil vulgatus. Neque (addere hoc audeo) inanius, immo noxius. Hinc enim tot turbae, nunc, et olim. Tot scelera atque immanitates atque haec omnia pietatis lenocinio obvelata' (ibid., no. 212). These comments almost certainly refer to Eschius' edition of Tauler with his own annex: Eschius N., *Joannis Thauleri De vita et passione Salvatoris nostri Jesu Christi, nunc demum ex idiomate germanico reddita latine. Adjuncta sunt ejusdem ferme argumenti alia quaedam exercitia auctore D. Nicholao Eschio*, 2 vols (Cologne: 1548). On Tauler, see Ozment S., *Homo Spiritualis: a comparative study of the anthropology of Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther (1509–16) in the context of their theological thought* (Leiden: 1969); Clark J., *The Great German Mystics* (New York: 1970). On Eschius see *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 5 (1909); and Cognet L., *Introduction aux Mystiques Rhéno-Flamands* (Brussels: 1965). Plantin wrote a letter to Grapheus about the legal position on printing Tauler's works: Rooses M. – Denucé J., *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin* (note 31) VI, no. 879.

While Tauler and Eschius represent a mainstream of acceptable mysticism, Ortelius' next recommendation was somewhat less orthodox: 'If this sort of thing is to your taste, I recommend you read the Paradoxes of S.F.'<sup>91</sup> This refers to the work of Sebastian Franck, and not to that of St Francis (contra Hessels). Franck's writings were regarded as heretical by all the major denominations and had been the focus of some controversy in the Netherlands during the 1560s as a result of the publication of numerous editions of his works and a defence by Coornhert.<sup>92</sup> Ortelius' only concern is about how difficult it might prove for his nephew to acquire a copy. A month later he restated his recommendation in response to comments from Ortelianus:

I understand what you say about the Paradoxes. They are available in our language, and if you listen to me you will read them. I believe there is more sap in them than in the writings of Tauler or Eschius.<sup>93</sup>

It is important to be sensitive to the different strands of thought that Ortelius is drawing upon. Franck's 'paradoxes' encapsulate his objection to all forms of visible church, his conviction that persecuting others is a sign of heretical belief, his objection to the 'new scholasticism' that he saw in reformed dogmatics, and his insistence on following conscience rather than the literal text of scripture. To recommend such a writer was to take a considerable risk indeed. Given Ortelius' candour in these letters, it is notable that he did not recommend the writings of Barrefelt or Niclaes, though argument from absence cannot be taken as strong evidence. It is true that Franck's writings may have influenced Familist ideas, but the points of divergence are significant and fundamental, relating to the issues of authority, affiliation and the certainty of spiritual knowledge, which also distinguish Ortelius' thought from Familism.<sup>94</sup> Although Barrefelt, contrary to Niclaes, was willing to cite authors who had influenced him (including Tauler), Sebastian Franck was not one of them. Thus, it is not apt to subsume Ortelius' remarks into a general current of undifferentiated

<sup>91</sup> 'Si huiusmodi ad gustum tuum? Me auctore leges Paradoxa S.F.' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii* [...] *Epistolae* [note 2] no. 212).

<sup>92</sup> On Franck see Williams G.H., *The Radical Reformation* (note 29) 694–703.

<sup>93</sup> 'De Paradoxis quae ais, intelligo. Exstant nostrate lingua. Et si me audires, ea legeres. Plus succi veri in istis, quam in illis, Tauleri aut Eschij volo' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii* [...] *Epistolae* [note 2] no. 214).

<sup>94</sup> Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 10–12.

mysticism that can be assumed to have merged in Familism. The writings of Franck were widely printed and read in the Netherlands, at least from the 1560s onwards, and provide a possible alternative source for anti-sectarian ideas to the writings or networks of Familists. Indeed, his rationalist, humanist approach to spiritualism would seem to fit much more closely with the sceptical outlook of Ortelius than the ideas of either Niclaes of Barrefelt.

Of Ortelius' contemporaries, the writer whose ideas drew most upon Sebastian Franck was Coornhert. However, by 1592 Coornhert seems to have become an unpopular man within the Ortelius circle. It was probably Coornhert's criticisms of Lipsius that caused the rift with Ortelius. Ortelius did not favour public controversy, but he was drawn into the debates over Lipsius on numerous occasions in the early 1590s, mostly in private correspondence, but also in print.<sup>95</sup> Thus, in his letter re-affirming to Ortelianus the value of Sebastian Franck's writings, he continued:

I do not know what to say as to what is written to you from Leiden about that great man by that worthless man (thus I call him, even if he is learned in letters); whether he is of the Pope or of Calvin is not known to me, and if he has ears to hear he will be neither, for there are errors on both sides. I was never so familiar with him in person, so that I cannot judge him. God knows him, and made him, as he made himself.<sup>96</sup>

Ortelius' repudiation of all concern about confessional allegiance has often been cited as evidence of his membership of the Family of Love. Thus, a few months later, responding to his nephew's refusal to come to stay in Antwerp, he wrote: 'I suppose what binds you is what binds all good men, namely religion. It binds me too, but not too place, time or men. To God only, having no part of these.'<sup>97</sup>

<sup>95</sup> *Iusti Lipsi ad Iac. Monavianum Epistola [. . .] cum duabus Ad Abr. Ortelium* (Antwerp: 1592); for private correspondence see elsewhere in this article.

<sup>96</sup> 'Ad id quod scribis tibi futilem illum, (sic enim eum voco (quamvis insigniter litteratum) et nosco) Lugduno scribere, de magno illo viro, non habeo quod dicam; nempe an Pontificis sit vel Calvinianus: mihi hoc enim non liquet. Et si aures ad audiendum habeat, neuter erit. Peccatur intus et extra. Ego illi coram numquam tam familiaris fui, ut de eo iudicem. Noscatur eum Deus: et faxit idem, ut ille sese' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] Epistolae* [note 2] no. 214).

<sup>97</sup> 'Ligat te, puto, quae ligat omnes bonos; religio nempe. Ligat et haec me: at minime ad locum, tempus, aut homines. Ad Deum tantum, expertem horum' (ibid., no. 228).

Yet, given the lack of pertinent evidence, it is not clear why the Family of Love should be excluded from this disavowal of all attachment to temporal religious affiliations. To claim Familism as the inspiration for Ortelius' statements is to ignore the more obvious source, Sebastian Franck, who was resistant to all claims to spiritual authority as the basis for gathering believers into a sect and argued that only God can identify heretical belief. Given that Ortelius never mentions the Family of Love in any extant sources but does praise Franck's writings highly, to posit the former over the latter as the source of his spiritualism is to give preference to circumstantial evidence over primary sources, an approach to interpretation that appears tendentious.

It is also noteworthy that, in his defence of Lipsius, Ortelius openly states that he is neither a follower of the pope nor of Calvin, and not merely that both are fallible. This fits with his reference twenty-five years earlier to 'der catholicken evel, guesen cortse, ende hugenoten melisoen'.<sup>98</sup> Thus, in addition to emphasising the individuality of Ortelius' religious beliefs, it is important to note that he had no lingering loyalty to Catholicism. This is particularly significant for Ortelius' role as defender of Lipsius after the latter's return to the Spanish Netherlands. He judges Lipsius' return neither through a Catholic bias, nor through reverence of his learning. Thus he continues in his letter to Ortelianus:

I think he is a man most learned (as the style is), but it does not seem to me from his books that he is uncommonly or supernaturally wise, which would be an affront to God. I do fear greatly that he rather strives to write well than to be good. But as the old saying teaches us to recognise our friends' faults but not to hate them, I will say no more about him. I know he is a man, and we are men. I consider the best and most learned to be those whose concern is virtue and the fear of God. Commonly they excel who are considered wise while killing knowledge and letters.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, nos 214 and 23.

<sup>99</sup> 'Pro viro eruditissimo (ut cum saeculo loquar) habeo. Sed supra vulgum aut divinitus eum aliquid sapere, quod desipere est apud Deum, hactenus mihi subodorari, ex eiusdem libris aut litteris non licuit. Vereor autem valde ne potius dicere bene, quam esse, summo studio contendat. At amicorum vitia quia nosse, non odisse, vetus doceat verbum: verbum de eo non addam. Hominem scio; et homines sumus. Optimos doctissimosque inter hos iudico, cui virtus et timor Dei curae. Vulgo illi habentur qui scientia litteraque occidente [2.Cor.3.6] inter eos excellunt' (*ibid.*, no. 214).

Ortelius' refusal to judge Lipsius, other than as a fallible mortal like himself, marks his divergence from the approach and beliefs of Coornhert, whose perfectibilism motivated a commitment to criticism, public and private, as an expression of charity. Indeed, to some extent Ortelius' statements fit the picture that Coornhert would paint of him. Although the dialogue was not the cause of the split between the two men, it may nonetheless have identified the cause in focusing on their disagreement over the importance of moral/doctrinal critique.

In August 1592, Ortelius again defended Lipsius, this time from claims reported by his cousin, Emanuel van Meteren. Ortelius claims not to know whether Lipsius is attending mass daily as a Catholic in Liège, but insists 'that he never professed the Dutch religion or took communion.' He also refutes the insinuation that Lipsius was quarrelling over money, citing examples of the offers that he has turned down and claiming that desire of money is as far as possible from Lipsius' character.<sup>100</sup> The support that Ortelius provided for his friend seems to have included acting as a bridge between Lipsius and his spurned colleagues in Leiden, providing information that the closely watched Lipsius could not safely communicate. Without further evidence, it is impossible to speculate on how widely Ortelius used his international network of contacts to create a favourable impression of Lipsius. Nevertheless, his intervention in the *cause célèbre* of his day suggests the response he might have given to Coornhert's claim that his disengagement from critique was a breach of charity: for Ortelius charity entailed discretion and peaceable co-existence in recognition of mankind's faults.

In order to characterise fully Ortelius' religious position in the 1590s, some consideration must be given to the context in which he was writing the letters. Evidently, Ortelius was not simply free to believe what he wished; he was a non-Catholic who remained in Antwerp during the beginnings of the re-catholicisation of the Spanish Netherlands. That the restrictions placed upon religion related primarily to public expression of belief should not obscure the cultural pressure on citizens to embrace Catholic doctrine as well as practices. In March 1593, he acknowledged the situation in a letter to his nephew:

---

<sup>100</sup> 'Dat hy noyt vande Hollandsche religie professie gedaen en heeft, oft nachtmæl genoten heeft' (ibid., no. 218).

There is nowhere sufficient freedom, except for the free, no more among you than here. But security lies in silence and in becoming invisible (by means of Gyges' ring). If I were with you without this ring, I would not escape the hand of Vulcan, I know that as sure as my own name. But the wise man is silent in such times, because the time is evil, as the prophet says, and being most Christian is not knowing, saying or doing this or that, but being. For the latter is of the few, the former of both good and bad. But about these things it is not possible to be open; in this way I think more freely than I speak.<sup>101</sup>

Although Ortelius lamented his lack of freedom in Antwerp, his position was more secure than ever, both financially and socially. In letters to his nephew, he repeatedly alluded to his considerable prosperity. Although his will is not extant, that of his sister confirms the impression that they were wealthy, though not exorbitantly so.<sup>102</sup> Ortelius invested considerable time and money in his collection of ancient coins and curiosities. In 1594, Archduke Ernst visited his museum of wonders, as did Archduke Albert the following year. Also in 1595, Ortelius presented an ornamental copy of the latest edition of his atlas to the town council; in return, the town treasurer Cornelius Pruynen made a presentation of a ruby cup and saucer, worth around 133 pounds.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, he seems to have cultivated connections that guaranteed his safety and reputation as a loyal Catholic citizen. Most important in this regard is his friendship with Torrentius and Lampson. His friendship with the former extended back at least to 1575, when he visited Torrentius' house in Liège while touring through southern Belgium and the northeast of France.<sup>104</sup> In January 1587, through

---

<sup>101</sup> 'Nullibi enim satis liberum, nisi libero. Non magis apud vos, quam apud nos. tacendo autem et inconspicuum (Gygas annuli medio) se prebere, una via est securitas. Apud vos si essem, sine annulo dicto, Vulcani manus mei non posse effugere, tam scio quam nomen meum. At in illo tempore sapiens tacebit, quia tempus malum est, ut inquit propheta. Et christianissimus est non hoc aut illud scire, dicere, vel agere, sed esse. Hoc enim paucorum est, illud malorum aequae ut bonorum. At de his non latius licet. Huiusmodi enim libentius cogito quam dico' (ibid., no. 229). The image of Gyges' ring is used by Torrentius three years earlier, apparently with the same connotation: 'Ille de quo ad Gandium scripsisti nunc Antverpiae est. En tibi versiculum: fida silentia sacris. Gygis ille annulus eum comitatur, sed aperta omnibus pala' (Delcourt M. – Hoyoux J. (eds.), *Laevinus Torrentius Correspondance* [note 35] vol. 2, letter 574).

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., nos 228 and 314. For Anne Ortels see Génard P., "La généalogie du géographe Abraham Ortelius" (note 3).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ortelius, *Itinerarium per nonnullas Galliae Belgicae partes*, ed. Klaus Schmitt-Ott (Frankfurt: 2000) 58.

the intermediary of Cornelius Pruynen, Ortelius thanked Torrentius for some favour. It is not clear whether this alludes to a religious or scholarly matter. Torrentius responded that he was glad to be of service to such a man and that Ortelius would enjoy good fortune and might philosophise mindful of him.<sup>105</sup> This exchange took place while Torrentius was preoccupied with smoothing the way for his arrival to take up his episcopal role in Antwerp, seeking to gain the confidence of the population to ensure their return to observance of the Catholic faith. It is quite possible that the letter alludes to reaching an understanding with Ortelius about his religious position. Earlier in January 1587 Torrentius had written to Lampson that Ortelius might proceed with his small matter.<sup>106</sup> Although this could refer to the *Thesaurus*, for which the last privilege was dated 29 April, neither the word 'negotiolum' in this, nor 'philosophetur' in the later, letter seem appropriate to the preparation of the book. Whether or not these references refer to Ortelius' religious standing in post-conquest Antwerp, by the end of the year (prior to his investigation by the town council) he enjoyed the full confidence of Torrentius, having been entrusted with his religious and political poems of the bishop that were apparently to be guarded with considerable secrecy.<sup>107</sup>

Antwerp in the 1590s was not a place eager to persecute those who caused no public disturbance, and it seems that Ortelius was unmolested in his continuous dealings with Protestants both in the rebellious northern provinces and in hostile England. Yet his pose as a faithful Catholic, scion of his city, was in despite, or because, of the failure of the Catholic regeneration to appeal to him. On 18 October 1595, he wrote to Ortelianus:

Everywhere there is fighting about religion, but no-one understands what it is; at least, no-one that I know. It is just as someone said in a German rhyme: Christ is either this or that; whoever has him not

---

<sup>105</sup> 'Quod de Ortelio adjicis (magnas eum agere gratias mihi) gaudeo collatum tali viro a me beneficium non minus quam ipse acceptavi. Fruatur bonis avibus et philosophetur mei memor' (Delcourt M. – Hoyoux J. (eds.), *Laevinus Torrentius Correspondance* [note 35] vol. 1, letter 252).

<sup>106</sup> 'Ortelius noster negotiolum quod commendasti conficiet' (Delcourt M. – Hoyoux J. [eds.], *Laevinus Torrentius Correspondance* [note 35] vol. 1, letter 250).

<sup>107</sup> On 2 November Lampson wrote to Ortelius, 'Significes nondum ab ipso expletum desiderium meum Syntagmatis ab ipso [Torrentius] conscripti de Pace, quod si mittere dignaberis, ego cum nemine mortalium communicabo, atque optima fide statim remittam' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii [...] Epistolae* [note 2] no. 154).

is not wise. For blessedness is not knowing Christ, but possessing him. Among whom are those who think they have him but do not know his name.<sup>108</sup>

In this and the previously quoted letter, Ortelius' insistence that Christianity is not about doing, saying or knowing, but about being, reflects his reading of mystical writings. More specifically, his argument that blessedness resides in possessing Christ and that there are some who can do so without even knowing his name, draws directly upon Sebastian Franck. That the Family of Love also drew upon this mystical tradition to emphasise the internal possession of Christ does not make Ortelius a Familist, any more than it makes Franck or Tauler a Familist.

Further evidence about Ortelius' religious beliefs comes in the form of a dialogue written by the Dutch humanist Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert in which Ortelius is the author's interlocutor. The author's background is important for understanding the text. An artist and engraver, long based in Haarlem, Coornhert decided at the age of thirty-five to learn Latin and subsequently to set up a printing press for which he produced Dutch translations of Classical texts. All of his writings were initially composed and published in Dutch, even polemics against others writing in Latin. It is in this last capacity that Coornhert attained fame and notoriety in his own day, and he is still best known as the antagonist of Justus Lipsius in the debate over the latter's argument in favour of national religious uniformity. Coornhert was one of the earliest proponents of genuine religious tolerance in modern Europe; thanks to the political and religious instability of the northern Netherlands during his life, he was not executed for his beliefs. Rather, he died in 1590 of what was described as "an apoplexy of the tongue."<sup>109</sup> The many who had been lashed by his tongue appear to have regarded this as a just fate, and it is only more recently that Coornhert's reputation has seen something of a revival.<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup> 'Utrunque de religione digladiatio: nullibi quid illa sit, intelligitur. Nusquam quod saltem ego sciam. Est ut quidam Germanico inquit rithmo: Christus ist wider dis oder das, Wer im niet hadt, der weyss nit was. Non scire enim Christum beatitas, at habere. Ex quo etiam habere eum sunt qui poterunt, neque nosse huius nomen' (Hessels J.H. [ed.], *Abrahami Ortelii* [...] *Epistolae* [note 2] no. 278).

<sup>109</sup> Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii* [...] *Epistolae* (note 2) no. 193.

<sup>110</sup> For a historiographical survey see Bongers H., *Leven en werk van Dirk Volckertsz*

Coornhert's connections with Hendrik Niclaes and the Family of Love extend as far back as 1546, when he had met Niclaes and provided illustrations for his publications. The details of the relationship between the two men are well known, so I shall only summarise them here. Niclaes sought to win Coornhert over to his growing group of followers, providing him with samples of his writings and seeking commentary on them. Coornhert was a critical reader from the beginning, but seems to have had some respect for Niclaes, who, it should be noted, was less emphatic about his own spiritual elevation at this stage of his career. Coornhert seems to have encountered Niclaes again during his travels in 1566, at which time the latter was beginning to re-orient his movement towards eirenic pacifism that would appeal to the learned humanists in Antwerp and Cologne. Niclaes' attempts to emphasise his own prophetic and apostolic calling at this point may not have impressed the fiercely humble Coornhert. Then, in 1577, Coornhert encountered a member of the Family of Love who, due to misunderstanding the Familist doctrine of sanctification, believed himself to be God. Coornhert, always alive to the importance of charity, took the trouble to convince this poor man that he was neither immortal, nor blessed, nor particularly joyous. The incident seems to have convinced Coornhert to write against the growing influence of the increasingly presumptuous Hendrik Niclaes, and a series of publications followed.<sup>111</sup>

In his dialogue with Ortelius, Coornhert begins with an introduction in which he claims that Ortelius argues in favour of peaceful repose while he himself argues for well-meaning involvement in the affairs of others. Yet the dialogue focuses rather on the question of what sorts of things can be known with certainty. This is because Ortelius expresses concern about the right of one man to give advice to another. This argument for tolerance on the basis of scepticism was becoming increasingly common in this period. However, the dialogue ends before there is any progression from debate about knowledge in general to debate about moral knowledge. Thus, much of

---

*Coornhert* (Amsterdam: 1978) 390–411. Aside from this work note also Bongers H. a.o. (ed.), *Dirk Volkertszoon Coornhert: Dwars maar Recht* (Zutphen: 1989); and Voogt G., *Constraint on Trial: Dirk Volkertsz Coornhert and Religious Freedom* (Kirksville/Missouri: 2000). Notably, Coornhert's writings enjoyed some currency during the Arminian debates in the Netherlands in the early seventeenth century.

<sup>111</sup> Bongers H., *Leven en werk* (note 110) 264–72; Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 111.

the text is taken up with Coornhert's attempts to show that all men know some things and that it is a breach of charity not to share what one knows with others. Ortelius is willing to grant that some knowledge can be attained, although it is indicated at the end that he maintains some doubts about the motives for distributing that knowledge, particularly with respect to his own motives in producing his atlas. Coornhert ends the dialogue with the conclusion that, since knowledge in the form of literacy and numeracy can be attained, a person who keeps his own counsel about matters in this life is a 'worthless wasp' who only takes from the world without giving anything in return. Coornhert's logic is rather weak, but the dialogue is an effective rhetorical exposition of the importance of, indeed necessity for, moral critique.<sup>112</sup>

What does Coornhert's literary dialogue reveal about Abraham Ortelius' religious beliefs? The latter's character is said to 'praise' the position of secure repose, a literary term which may suggest a set-piece dialogue in which the characters defend positions other than their own. On the other hand, there are a number of indications that this dialogue was based on an actual discussion between the two men, albeit later grafted into a conventional literary form. This is particularly clear at the end when Coornhert, unusually, insists 'and this is what I wanted to say', as if he didn't get his point across to Ortelius in the actual conversation and so is expressing himself in this literary dialogue. He adds that the conversation continued about Ortelius' doubts whether, with regard to his atlas, he had his own or the readers' interests in mind. The 'reality effect' is thus compelling. Nonetheless, whether or not the dialogue actually took place, it is clear from other texts that Coornhert's interlocutors, when they are named after real people, do defend positions broadly attributable to their namesakes, albeit seen from Coornhert's perspective.<sup>113</sup>

In this instance, Ortelius is presented as a humble sceptic, suspicious of the vanity of attempting to impose one's opinion on others. The arguments that Coornhert attributed to Ortelius are identical to those about which he debated in correspondence with Plantin.<sup>114</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> The dialogue can be found in Coornhert D.V., *Wercken* (Amsterdam: 1630) I, f. 80r-v; also see the modern Dutch translation in Bonger H. – Gelderblom A.-J. (eds.), *Weet of rust: Proza van Coornhert* (Amsterdam: 1993) 33–37, 132–33.

<sup>113</sup> Coornhert D.V., *Wercken* (note 112) I, f. 80r-v.

<sup>114</sup> See Becker B., "Thierry Coornhert et Christophe Plantin", *Gulden Passer* 1 (1923) 113–23.

Notably, these ideas are directly converse to those he associated with the Family of Love. Coornhert objected to the credulity of Familists, who were supposed to follow Hendrik Niclaes unquestioningly and to respect his writings more than the Bible. He found the arrogance of Niclaes particularly offensive, as he did the ignorance of the Familist who claimed to be god. Coornhert was aware that Barrefelt's brand of Familism was different from that of Niclaes. He had read Barrefelt's writings and knew that Plantin was connected to him. Alastair Hamilton concluded that, in his dialogue with Ortelius and his letter to Plantin, Coornhert astutely identified scepticism as a distinctive feature of Antwerp Familism.<sup>115</sup> Yet, Coornhert does not suggest any link between Ortelius and Barrefelt and, indeed, his own argument fits better with Barrefelt's reliance on revealed truth. The humble (albeit pernicious) scepticism of Ortelius and Plantin troubled Coornhert as much as Barrefelt's claim to express inspired truth in obscure style. Coornhert may have seen that doubts as to the value of moral critique might create a receptive environment for Barrefelt's mysticism, but rather than presenting the idea as originating with the latter, he seems concerned with a broader milieu that included Ortelius.

Coornhert and Ortelius evidently had some regard for each other; however, at some stage the two men fell out and at the end of his life Coornhert was not popular among Ortelius' circle of friends. Indeed, his entry is later scored out of Ortelius' album of inscriptions from friends (though it is as significant that it was included in the first place).<sup>116</sup> It is possible that Coornhert's critique of Ortelius' religious beliefs generated this disagreement; however, there is no evidence of an edition of the dialogue appearing in Ortelius' lifetime, and it is not certain that he ever saw it. Given that he was in correspondence with Coornhert it is probable that the latter would have sent it to him, but only because it was not satirical or polemical. It is much more likely that Ortelius and Coornhert fell out over the latter's public attack upon Justus Lipsius, a friend whom Ortelius defended throughout his network, and for whom he acted as a mediator with old colleagues after Lipsius' controversial return to the

<sup>115</sup> Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 107.

<sup>116</sup> See Ortelius, *Album Amicorum*, 120. For the friendship between the two men see Hessels J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] Epistolae* (note 2) no. 79.

Spanish Netherlands.<sup>117</sup> Nonetheless, the evident hostility towards Coornhert within Ortelius' circle by the 1590s, does not seriously impair his credibility as a witness to Ortelius' beliefs at an earlier point. As a contributor to the friendship album of his correspondent, Coornhert's testimony, in what is the only extant extended description of Ortelius' religious beliefs written during the latter's lifetime, must stand unless contradicted by other sources. In this respect it is worthy of note that he attributes to Ortelius the opposite idea of his atlas to that put forward by Postel—Ortelius worries about his motives in publishing the book, rather than presenting it as a means to reunify the world through spiritual regeneration. Coornhert's dialogue describes Ortelius' religious beliefs in their own right as the attitudes of an individual; Postel's letters impose his own theories with little regard to the stated opinions of his subject. Neither writer claimed that Ortelius was a Familist.

From Ortelius' letters, it is clear that he cared a great deal about the factional religious politics of his day. He followed events avidly, reporting to his relatives in London and to trusted friends abroad, always questioning the reliability of information. His scepticism about the likelihood of the situation improving appears frequently in the letters he wrote in the last years of his life. This increased pessimism is reflected in the difference between the motto he used in the 1550s and that which he adopted in the 1590s—from 'Virtuti fortuna comes' to 'Contemno et orno, mente, manu.' Yet the religiosity that he cultivated in secrecy as he approached death does not seem significantly altered from that of earlier years.<sup>118</sup> There is, of course, much that remains unknown about his religious position at various stages throughout his life. Thus, it is not clear why the Privy Council suspected him of Lutheranism when any suspicions that arose at a local level were apparently due to his relations with a Calvinist. Perhaps, since his Catholicism was in question, and since he had shown no open support for the Calvinist administration, Lutheranism was the most likely guess. Equally at ease with Protestant rebels and Catholic bishops, he maintained friendships with people from all Christian denom-

---

<sup>117</sup> For the Coornhert-Lipsius controversy see Güldner G., *Das Toleranz-Problem in den Niederlanden* (note 74) 65–158; and Gelderen M. van, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt 1555–1590* (Cambridge: 1992) 243–56.

<sup>118</sup> For Ortelius' political outlook see the letters to Vulcanius: Leiden, *Cod. Vulc. 105, III* dated 28.3.93, 9.6.93 and 30.4.98.

inations. It is not surprising that his closest friendships seem to have been with others whose religious position was ambiguous—Plantin, Vulcanius, Lipsius, Mylius and Galle. Ultimately, it is impossible to trace all the influences on Ortelius' thought with only fragments of his correspondence remaining, and with little record of his library. He collected books and opinions widely and his observations only rarely survive. We know that he read David Joris with distaste, and that he was proud to possess a rare book edited by Flaccius Illyricus, but the reasons behind these feelings are obscure.<sup>119</sup> Nonetheless, the major contours of his religious position can be traced. From his early encounter with reforming ideas to his later reading of the stoics, mystics, Acontius, and, perhaps above all, Sebastian Franck, he seems to have maintained an interest in reformation without ever embracing Protestantism.

The case of the Family of Love requires more caution, as contacts can easily be confused with membership, of which there is no evidence in this case. Ortelius' stated aversion to any form of affiliation with religious groups must have distanced him from Niclaes. There is simply no evidence of a direct connection to Barrefelt, but less reason to suppose such a connection uncharacteristic. It is striking that none of the extant correspondence of Ortelius with other supposed members of the Family of Love contains any reference to the group or its activities. Only Postel mentions it, and it is clear that he knew neither Ortelius nor the Family of Love very well at the time. Why, then, have so many historians been convinced that Ortelius and those around him were Familists? This is due, in part, to taking Plantin's connections with the Family of Love, however they may be interpreted, as representative of the ideas of Antwerp's humanists. Yet already in the 1550s, prior to his first known contact with Plantin, Ortelius seems to have had the same religious outlook as later, when supposedly under the influence of Familism. This is characterised by: disregard for confessional boundaries, insistence on internal rather than external devotion, willingness to dissimulate rather than face martyrdom, and a temperamental affinity with eirenicism. This is not Familism. For Ortelius, it seems to have been the result of reaching adult life under the influence of ideas of reform that

---

<sup>119</sup> Hamilton A., *The Family of Love* (note 4) 72; see the letter to Vulcanius: Leiden, *Cod. Vulc.* 105, III dated 22.8.97.

were forcibly suppressed by the local government. Unlike those of his family who left for England, Ortelius inherited a business from his father that was best maintained in Antwerp. He conformed to the religion decreed by the state, though he lost neither his sympathy for nor his contacts with Protestant reformers. It is not surprising that he turned to the writings of the Classical stoics and the Christian mystics, those who emphasised personal virtue over indifferent, external goods. Instead of becoming a Protestant, Ortelius rejected organised religion. It is, of course, possible that he was attracted to the eirenic message of the Family of Love amid the volatile religious polemic of the 1560s, but the weight of the evidence suggests that this is unlikely. Ortelius did not adopt the language of the Family of Love in any of his extant correspondence; instead, his language is dominated by stoicism. His discussion of inner spirituality is neither unusual nor specifically Familist; rather, his religious outlook reflects his upbringing with reforming ideas under a repressive government. Thus, I must disagree with Alastair Hamilton when he states that the desire for religious peace among Plantin's circle 'can hardly be attributed to the wars of religion in the sixteenth century.' For the majority, who did not turn to Calvinism or doctrinaire Catholicism, the desire for religious peace was paramount, whether for political, moral, or economic reasons.<sup>120</sup> Familism is no more necessary to explain the beliefs of Ortelius than it is to explain those of William of Orange.

It is possible to argue that the Family of Love, particularly Barrefelt's version, would flourish in such a situation. One Reformed minister, Adriaan Saravia, felt that those around Barrefelt 'adapt everything in the Scriptures to a Stoic philosophy.'<sup>121</sup> In a society where the visible church was a byword for formalism, the secular life of contemplatives may well have filled a gap left by the diminishing numbers of orthodox mystics and divines. What associating with such people might mean is hard to interpret, particularly when they disclaimed followers and the formation of any kind of sect. Rather than

---

<sup>120</sup> Hamilton A., "Hiël and the Hiëlists" (note 4) 272; elsewhere Hamilton acknowledges the influence. See Woltjer J.J., "Opstand en onafhankelijkheid" and "De vredemakers", both recently reprinted in the author's *Tussen vrijheidsstrijd en burgeroorlog: over de Nederlandse opstand 1555–1580* (Amsterdam: 1994) 9–89.

<sup>121</sup> Crombruggen H. van, "Een brief van Adriaan Saravia over Lipsius en 'het Huis der Liefde'", *De Gulden Passer* 28 (1950) 110–17.

acclaiming the Antwerp humanists as Hiëlists, it seems more appropriate to question what kind of role Barrefelt might have had in their society and how he may have shaped his message to their beliefs. However that may be, indirect prosopographic evidence is not sufficient to prove membership of the Family of Love; rather, it tends to demonstrate the smallness of Antwerp's intellectual community. Ortelius' statements with regard to religion can sufficiently be understood through the writers he mentions to others: Tauler, Eschius, Plato, Seneca and Sebastian Franck. If his ideas led him to be critical of the religious alternatives presented to him, he suppressed the impulse to admonish. His letters from the 1590s testify to his enforced silence in a society flooded by new forms of lay piety, while he seems to have observed the hardening boundaries of confession-alisation with an eye towards the folly of man. He openly expressed this vision of the world in the text of his atlas, and he surrounded his last world map with quotations that encapsulated it: the responsibility of man towards the world, his ambitions and wars, the need to contemplate the whole of creation, and the desire for understanding. The quotation from Cicero that also faced readers of his first edition in 1570 stood at the bottom of the page: 'What of human affairs can seem great to someone who knows all eternity and the entire universe.'<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> 'Quid ei potest videri magnum in rebus humanis, cui aeternitas omnis, totiusque mundi nota sit magnitudo' (Ortelius, "Typis Orbis Terrarum", *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* [Antwerp: 1592]).

*Selective Bibliography*

- BERKVEN-STEVELINCK CHR., A.O. (ed.), *The Emergence of Tolerance in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: 1997).
- BONGER H., *Leven en werk van Dirk Volckertsz Coomhert* (Amsterdam: 1978).
- BOUMANS R., "Was Abraham Ortelius katholiek of protestant?", *Handelingen der Zuidnederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal- en Letterkunde en Geschiedenis* 6 (1952) 109–27.
- BOUWSMA W.J., *Concordia mundi: The career & thought of Guillaume Postel (1510–81)* (Harvard: 1957).
- BROECKE M.P.R. VAN DEN – KROGT P. VAN DER – MEURER P. (eds.), *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas: Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of His Death, 1598–1998* (The Hague: 1998).
- COCKSHAW P. – NAVE F. DE (eds.), *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598), cartograaf en humanist* (Turnhout: 1998).
- COORNHERT D.V., *Wercken* (Amsterdam: 1630).
- DENUCÉ J., *Oud-Nederlandsche Kaartmakers in betrekking met Plantijn* (Antwerp: 1912–13).
- DEWITTE A., "Abraham Ortelius en Bonaventura Vulcanius (1574–1598)", *De Gulden Passer* 63 (1985) 417–27.
- FONTAINE VERWEY H. DE LA, "Trois hérésiarques dans les Pays-Bas du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle", *BHR* 16 (1945) 312–30.
- , "Het Huis der Liefde en zijn publicaties", in H. de la Fontaine Verwey, *Uit de wereld van het boek. I. Humanisten, dweepers en rebellen in de zestiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1975) 85–111.
- GÉNARD P., "La généalogie du géographe Abraham Ortelius", *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie d'Anvers*, V (Antwerp: 1880) 312–56.
- HAMILTON A., "Hiël and the Hiëlists: The Doctrine and Followers of Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt", *Quaerendo* 7 (1977) 243–86.
- , *The Family of Love* (Cambridge: 1981).
- , "The Family of Love in Antwerp", *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 70 (1987) 87–96.
- (ed.), *Cronica. Ordo Sacerdotis. Acta HN* (Documenta anabaptistica Neerlandica; 6) (Leiden: 1988).
- HESSELS J.H. (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii (geographi Antverpiensis) et virorum eruditorum ad eundem et ad Jacobum Ortelianum (Abrahami Ortelii sororis filium) epistulae cum aliquot aliis epistulis et tractatibus quibusdam ab utroque collectis (1524–1628) ex autographis mandante ecclesia Londino-Batavae* (reprint) (Osnabrück: 1969).
- KOEMAN C., *Abraham Ortelius* (Lausanne: 1964).
- MANGANI G., *Il "mondo" di Abramo Ortelio; Misticismo, geografia e collezionismo nel Rinascimento dei Paesi Bassi* (Ferrara: 1998).
- MARINUS M.J., *Laevinus Torrentius als tweede bisschop van Antwerpen (1587–1595)* (Brussels: 1995).
- MARNEF G., *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis, 1550–1577* (Baltimore: 1996).
- MARSH C., *The Family of Love in English Society 1550–1630* (Cambridge: 1993).
- MESKENS A., "Liaisons dangereuses: Peter Heyns en Abraham Ortelius", *De Gulden Passer* 76–77 (1998–99) 95–108.
- MOSS J.D., *'Godded with God': Hendrik Niclaes and his Family of Love* (Philadelphia: 1981).
- MOUT N., "The Family of Love (Huis der Liefde) and the Dutch Revolt", in *Church and State since the Reformation*, 7 (The Hague: 1981) 76–93.
- NEVINSON J.L., "Emanuel van Meteren, 1535–1612", *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society* (London: 1952–1958) 128–45.
- NIPPOLD F., "Hendrik Niclaes und das Haus der Liebe", *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie* 32 (1862).
- PURAYE J. E.A. (ed.), *Album Amicorum Abraham Ortelius* (Amsterdam: 1969).

- REKERS B., *Benito Arias Montano (1527–1598)* (Groningen: 1961).
- ROOSES M., “Ortelius et Plantin: note communiqué à M. P. Génard”, *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Géographie d’Anvers* 5 (1880) 350–56.
- ROOSES M. – DENUCE J., *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, 9 vols. (Antwerp: 1883–1918).
- THIJS A.K.L., *Van Geuzenstad tot Katholiek Bolwerk: Antwerpen en de Contrareformatie* (Turnhout: 1990).
- VALKEMA BLOUW P., “Was Plantin a Member of the Family of Love? Notes on his Dealings with Hendrik Niclaes”, *Querendo* 23 (1993) 3–23.
- , “Geheime activiteiten van Plantin, 1555–1583”, *Gulden Passer* 73 (1995) 5–36.
- VERDUYN W.B., *Emanuel van Meteren: bijdrage tot de kennis van zijn leven, zijn tijd, en het ontstaan van zijn geschiedwerk* (The Hague: 1926).
- VOET L., *The Golden Compasses. A History and Evaluation of the Printing and Publishing Activities of the Officina Plantiniana at Antwerp*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: 1969–72).
- WAUWERMANS H., “Abraham Ortelius”, in *Biographie nationale*, 16 (Brussels: 1901) 291–332.

*This page intentionally left blank*

## THE QUANDARY OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH MASTERS<sup>1</sup>

Mia M. Mochizuki

After the permanent appropriation of Catholic churches and cathedrals in the last decades of the sixteenth century, the Dutch Reformed church masters were confronted with a dilemma: in the chaotic aftermath of iconoclasm how should they visually propagate the new belief to a public notoriously sensitive to church decoration?<sup>2</sup> Northern Netherlandish churches were at a crossroads and the redecoration of these church interiors required careful consideration. A solution was needed that would incorporate both Reformed and secular interests and prepare the church for its new role in a multi-confessional society. To survive, ornamentation would have to be utterly distinct in form from the munificence of late medieval Catholic devotional art and its idolatrous associations. And to succeed, this decoration had to appeal to a much broader audience. What emerged was a balancing of religious and civic ideals that solidified the Dutch Reformed Church's early position as a public, but not a state church.

The *Last Supper/Siege of Haarlem* structure, ca. 1581, which stands as the Reformed solution to the Catholic high altarpiece in the Great Church in Haarlem, lucidly illustrates these ideas and will serve as a focus with which to examine the new Reformed text paintings that appeared in churches throughout the Northern Netherlands during the first century after iconoclasm.<sup>3</sup> Following C.A. van Swigchem's

---

<sup>1</sup> This article is based upon parts of my unpublished PhD dissertation, 'The Reformation of Devotional Art and the Great Church in Haarlem', Yale University, 2001. I am grateful to Christopher S. Wood, Carlos M.N. Eire, J. Michael Montias, J.J. Pollitt and Eric Jan Sluiter for their considerable time and criticism of the thesis. Several conversations with C.A. van Swigchem and Ilja M. Veldman had a major impact on the development of themes and their patience with my questions, as well as their generous guidance, is very much appreciated. A.J.E. Harmsen was particularly gracious in checking my transcriptions and translations of the texts in the Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Although much has been written on the process leading up to iconoclasm in the Netherlands, less has been written on what followed. The most relevant works for this paper are listed in the *Selective bibliography*.

<sup>3</sup> Dutch Reformed text paintings can be subdivided into distinct genres, such as

pathbreaking work in the field, this paper will show the theological roots underpinning the new verbal iconography of Dutch Reformed text painting. No other form of church decoration was so defined by location as these paintings of the Word, a truly locative form of applied art. The placement of the *Last Supper/Siege of Haarlem* structure will then be examined to understand the Janus-like two faces that church decoration presented to society: the private Reformed notions of theology and the patriotism of the local public. Largely based upon Calvin's ideas on art, the considerations of this liminal or swing period in early modern attitudes toward space within churches in fact also determined the installation of visual material outside churches, laying the theoretical foundation for secular art collecting that prefaced aesthetic value over devotional intent.

### *The Reformers' Influence*

The first three decades of the sixteenth century were a tumultuous time in the religious culture of Western Europe. Drawing upon initial attempts at reform by Erasmus and Zwingli, Calvin made lasting contributions to Reformation theology that were largely responsible for the distinctive character of Dutch Reformed church decoration.

Erasmus of Rotterdam was the first to posit the textual tradition as an avenue for rectification and reform within the Catholic Church, advocating a return to the golden age of the early church by means of a purified theology.<sup>4</sup> He wrote that true Christians should only

---

biblical, memorial and guild paintings. The front of the *Last Supper/Siege of Haarlem* structure may be classified as a biblical text painting and the back as a memorial painting. Texts used in Dutch Reformed paintings of the Word range from the Bible to rhetorician-style poetry, memorials and lists of servants of the church, but these verbal paintings grew out of the ideal of a specific text, the Bible, as a form of independent ornamentation and it is this text, the Word, that came to dominate and govern the workings of this genre. To this end I will use 'Dutch Reformed text paintings', 'paintings of the Word' and 'Word-paintings' more or less synonymously. For more on Dutch Reformed text paintings and their decorative role in the wake of late medieval Catholic devotional art, see Mochizuki M.M., "Supplanting the Sacred Image after Netherlandish Iconoclasm", *Negating the Image: Case Studies of Past Iconoclasm*, eds. Anne McClanahan – Jeffrey Johnson (London: 2003), forthcoming.

<sup>4</sup> Eire C.M.N., *War Against the Idols. The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: 1986) 28; Freedberg D., *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: 1989) 54, *passim*.

execute portraits of God's mind that venerate the Holy Spirit, and that the writings, or '*litterae*', were the best 'picture' of God.<sup>5</sup> Erasmus stressed the textual and scriptural dimension of incarnation. Much like the consequences of his other ideas for religious reform, the Erasmian ideal of capturing a verbal portrait of God through the representation of his ideas in place of his physiognomy would provide the direction for the creation of a verbal iconography for Dutch Reformed church interiors.

If Erasmus's writings supplied formal ideals, Zwingli's struggle for external reform of the Catholic church in Switzerland laid the basis for new content. Zwingli stressed the psychological roots of false worship and outlined how God should be the principal focus of worship. Calvin then refined Zwingli's belief that idolatry lay in human beings rather than in the material world, emphasizing the invisible, spiritual aspect of God that found its visual counterpoint in the abstract representation of the divine in non-figural text paintings. Like Zwingli, Calvin did not just want to remove images. He wanted to create a new kind of worship, new forms for reverential acts, and new avenues for human interaction with the divine. Further, Calvin wanted to reform the outward expression of faith, communal piety, not just doctrine. This led to a need for a new kind of material art and new forms of church decoration that would be tangible markers of the theoretical distance between Calvin's beliefs and those of the Lutheran and Catholic Churches. Text paintings of the Word most clearly expressed this ideological identity. The positivist impulse to create, not just remove and destroy, was the primary reason why Dutch Reformed church decoration had such a distinctive character and why Calvin's challenge to Catholicism was so permanent and effective. This was not the divorce of art from religion as so often believed, but a deep-rooted revitalization and redefinition of applied art in the service of church decoration, an expression of the potential range within the complexities of sixteenth-century religious culture.

Since Calvin wrote that the use of images for the church was acceptable, as long as it was not abused, church ornamentation actually flourished after iconoclasm. But the representation of divine figures was not to be tolerated. Figural portraits of God and Christ

---

<sup>5</sup> Eire, *War Against the Idols* (note 4) 39.

inverted divine order, representing the divine on man's terms and constituting a form of visual blasphemy. These figural paintings contradicted Calvin's notions of '*solī deo gloria*' and '*finitum non est capax infiniti*', mistakenly glorifying man's form and seeking to limit the eternal within the finite. Therefore after figural imagery was removed from the church, the central question became: how should the divine be represented without recourse to the human figure? There too Calvin supplied the answer, extrapolating from Erasmus to provide a new paradigm for church decoration: '*In principio verbum est*', or 'In the beginning is the Word'. In a remarkably creative manipulation and extension of earlier formal qualities in traditional Catholic art, artists replaced the physical figural portraits of God and Christ with his Word. His Word was presented as large scale paintings of text on panels and walls adorned with the visual qualities—style, form, and composition—usually deemed the province of figural imagery.

With strong roots in Erasmian and Zwinglian theology, Calvin's ban on the figural imagery of God and his endorsement of the Word were the two most important prerequisites for Reformed text paintings.

### *Last Supper Panel*

Commissioned by the Dutch Reformed church masters of the Great Church in Haarlem ca. 1581, the *Last Supper* panel, or '*Avondmaalsbord*', was the primary painted addition to the church in the first years after the permanent assumption of control by the Dutch Reformed, and it exemplifies the Dutch Reformed contribution to church decoration in form, content and intended audience [Fig. 8].<sup>6</sup>

Originally part of a five-part program to redecorate the choir, which included *Ten Commandments*, *Matthew* and *John* panels, the *Last Supper* was indubitably the jewel in the crown. The *Last Supper* dec-

---

<sup>6</sup> The *Last Supper* panel is still in its original location in the Great Church in Haarlem. The external measurements of the *Last Supper* including the frame reach 125 in. wide (3,18 m) and 166 in. high (4,22 m) to the apex of the pediment. The internal measurements, the wooden panel without the elaborate frame, are 96 in. wide (2,44 m) and 95½ in. high (2,43 m), almost a perfect square. These measurements should be considered approximate. Down the middle of the *Last Supper* is a split which may be either the result of aging wood or the loosening of a joint if it was originally composed of two panels.

orates the front- or choir-side of a wooden structure that completes the choir enclosure with the back- or ambulatory-side dedicated to the *Siege of Haarlem*. The *Last Supper* panel consists of one main rectangular field of gold text presented against a solid black ground. The whole is encased in an architectonic frame, complete with a triangular pediment featuring the barren tree from the coat of arms of the city of Haarlem, a frieze filled with a painted heading, Ionic side pilasters and a garlanded base. The barren tree in the coat of arms of the city of Haarlem, a symbol of particular reference to the trials of the long Siege of Haarlem is the only secular reference to what follows on the reverse. The significance of the celebration of the Last Supper in the Reformed service, that the symbolic reenactment of Christ's death provides eternal life for his believers, '*D'Heer Christus 't Hemelsch brood Geeft 't leven door sijn dood*', is clarified as a heading across the top of the frame.<sup>7</sup> The main text consists of biblical excerpts from Corinthians I, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all describing the Last Supper [see Appendix]. These are the same excerpts chosen for *Last Supper* panels throughout the Netherlands.

The great advantage of the *Last Supper* panel was its ability to represent the Last Supper without figural devices. The rejection of figural imagery, in particular that of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and the saints, recurs throughout Calvin's writings on images. Neither Christ nor the apostles are illustrated as figures, yet the story is still communicated clearly. Textual painting used proper names to represent people, while keeping their painted corporeal presence at one remove. Abstraction and the distillation of figures into words entailed the effacement of the human manifestation of the divine, short-circuiting potentially idolatrous behavior. The textual and scriptural dimension of incarnation was stressed; the Word was not made flesh, but written. Where figural scenes had been shrouded in ambiguity, historical and temporal specificity became increasingly manifest. Moreover, text paintings offered what figural paintings could not: the actual Word of God. The Netherlands always enjoyed an unusually high literacy rate, and by the end of the sixteenth century, it was assumed that most people could read the paintings.

---

<sup>7</sup> The heading is painted in later handwriting, probably eighteenth century or more recent, suggesting that it was either added later or that the original message was repainted.

The rejection of a figural visual vocabulary had a deep-rooted theological basis. Michalski has convincingly argued that the refutation of the real presence in the Eucharist was a central issue in the image debate.<sup>8</sup> For Calvinists this was particularly true. The Reformed denied the Catholic belief in transubstantiation.<sup>9</sup> For the Calvinists, like the Zwinglians, there was no real presence, or '*praesentia realis*', in the bread and wine, an idea fundamental to the late medieval Catholic celebration of communion.<sup>10</sup> In Reformed belief the celebration of the Last Supper was simply a memorial meal where the bread and wine symbolically recalled the original sacrifice of Christ's body, but did not physically become his flesh and blood.<sup>11</sup> For Calvinists the rejection of the physical transubstantiation of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood was underscored in the aesthetic rejection of figural devotional art. If the presence of Christ in the bread and wine was only symbolic, rather than literal, the non-figural representation of Christ indicated the partial presence of Christ, rather than his actual contained Spirit, steering clear of idolatry.

---

<sup>8</sup> Michalski S., *The Reformation of the Visual Arts. The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe* (London: 1993) 169–180.

<sup>9</sup> Following Catholic belief there were seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, communion, confession, extreme unction, priesthood and marriage. Not only did the Reformed reduce the number to two, they also tried to celebrate them in the simplest manner possible. Moreover the very idea of '*sacramentum*', the Latin word for the Greek '*mysterion*', or the idea of making something hidden visible, contradicted Reformed sensibilities. The Reformed rejected the Catholic belief in the sacraments as a mystery, preferring to regard them as a sign or seal from God, as in the case of the Last Supper, rather than as a holy event. Van Swigchem C.A. a.o., *Een huis voor het Woord* (The Hague: 1984) 27.

<sup>10</sup> Caspers regards the real presence of Christ and the need for communion as no less than the two pillars on which the celebration of the Eucharist in the late medieval Catholic liturgy rests. Caspers C.M.A., "Het laatmiddeleeuwse passiebeeld. Een interpretatie vanuit de theologie- en vroomheidsgeschiedenis", *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 45 (1994) 167–169. For more on Calvin's position on the Last Supper, see Spijker W. van 't a.o. (eds.), *Bij brood en beker. Leer en gebruik van het Heilig Avondmaal in het Nieuwe Testament en in de geschiedenis van de westerse kerk* (Kampen: 1999) 178–225.

<sup>11</sup> Generally the Dutch Reformed, like the Lutherans and Mennonites, celebrated the Last Supper in procession, although some Reformed communities re-enacted sitting around a table set out for this purpose. Van Swigchem a.o., *Een huis voor het Woord* (note 9) 213. For more on the variations in the ceremony and their origins, see Dulk M. den, "Tafelen in de kerk. Een opstandige avondsmalsliturgie", *De zeventiende eeuw* 10 (1994) 24–28. For more on the antecedents of the Last Supper, see Trimp C., *Het altaar gebroken, de tafel hersteld. De reformatie van de avondsmalsliturgie in de gereformeerde kerken van de zestiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1979).

Traditional formal stylistic qualities were appropriated for the representation of text in the *Last Supper* panel, lending support to understanding text paintings as objects originally intended, at least in part, for visual scrutiny. In the main text seventeen words are capitalized, of which seven begin a new sentence or thought. Words of special importance—such as ‘Lord’, ‘Jesus’, ‘Bread’, ‘Body’, ‘Last Supper’, ‘Testament’, ‘Blood of Christ’ and ‘Body of Christ’ (*Heere*, ‘*Jesús*’, ‘*Broof*’, ‘*Lijf*’, ‘*Avontmael*’, ‘*Testament*’, ‘*Bloede*’, ‘*Bloets Christi*’ and ‘*Lichaems Christi*’)—are capitalized with ornate calligraphic letters. These words encapsulate the central characters and components of this event. A quick scan of the text suffices to reveal the subject, without requiring a reading of the text in detail. Moreover by creating a severe compositional focus with the word ‘*Avontmael*’, or ‘Last Supper’, placed just to the left of the center of the text, the subject of the panel may be surmised at a glance. The composition of the painting borrows from earlier illuminated manuscript traditions with the first letter of the initial word visually emphasized by the largest decorative calligraphic letter of the entire text. Fittingly, and it must be no accident, the first word is the ‘I’ which refers to Christ, who directly addresses the congregants in his appeal.

The placement of the *Last Supper* panel reinforces the significance of the message it announces. The dramatically simple classical lines of the panel provide a sharp focus, and function as an arresting stop to the main eastern axis, the most important sight line of the St Bavo or Great Church. During the Catholic period, the central focus of the liturgy had been the choir and more specifically the high altarpiece, which had originally included contributions from Mouwerijn and Claas van Waterlant (active in Haarlem 1473–1509 and 1485–1503 respectively).<sup>12</sup> The installation of the *Last Supper* precisely where the former high altarpiece stood earlier was immensely important for the symbolic appropriation of the Great Church, although for the Reformed the true core of the church was in the nave where the pulpit was

---

<sup>12</sup> Many speculative reconstructions of this altarpiece have been made, and regardless of different conclusions, it is clear that originally it must have been something very special indeed. For the most recent summary of the arguments, see Bangs J.D., “The Master of Alkmaar and Hand X. The Haarlem Painters of the Van Waterlant Family”, *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 60 (1999) 65–162.

used for the announcement and dissemination of the Word.<sup>13</sup> By erecting a monumental text painting as the focal point of the new choir, the choir was not only subjugated to second place after the nave, but its entire character was changed to emphasize the power of the Word. In this new role the *Last Supper* painting became a repository for the Word, much like the pulpit in the nave, the new center of the Reformed service. Even the way the *Last Supper* was displayed recalled the element of announcement itself, the gospel, the joyous message, and functioned like a preacher delivering a permanent sermon.

The choice for a verbal iconography reflects an appeal and a reminder to a discrete group, those who subscribed to Dutch Reformed ideals. The new visual opportunities afforded to this group were most clearly seen in the redecoration of the choir. Where previously only Catholic clergy were permitted to enjoy the figural imagery of the choir at every mass, now many Dutch Reformed churches used their choir for the memorial of the Last Supper, which was open to all congregants when it was celebrated usually only four or five times each year. These new viewers were members of the Reformed Church who submitted to the spiritual jurisdiction of their local classis, and were therefore considered full members of the church. The fact that the texts were in Dutch, not Latin, Greek or Hebrew, made them more widely accessible and should be understood as a key component of many Protestant reform movements which stressed the need for translation of the Bible into the local vernacular. The text paintings visible from within the choir, such as the *Last Supper* panel, would then be seen, read and understood by the entire professing community, not just the spiritual leaders of the Reformed Church. With the *Last Supper* panel, the Calvinist church masters transformed the high altar from a Catholic holy locus on earth, to the most perfect Reformed portrait of Christ. The Word was substituted for figural imagery and the private community of members of the Reformed Church replaced the Catholic religious elite. In terms of form, content and audience the former choir was transformed into an enclave for Dutch Reformed citizens.

---

<sup>13</sup> Small holes are still visible in the stone base where the Catholic high altar-piece was attached earlier.

*Patriotic Pride*

Once the challenge of creating a distinctive Reformed genre of painting had been met, the church masters had no choice but to face the ambiguous position of the Dutch Reformed Church in the early modern Netherlands.

Before iconoclasm Catholicism had a rather strong base in Haarlem, which was not a city with especially pronounced Protestant sentiments. Of all the churches in the Northern Netherlands in the sixteenth century, the St Bavo or Great Church in Haarlem was second only to the cathedral at Utrecht in size and importance, and it far outshone the churches at Dordrecht, Leiden, and Delft, cities less wedded to Catholic allegiances. In fact the St Bavo was even elevated to the status of a cathedral church in 1559, so the strength of the bishopric of Haarlem could hardly be erased overnight.<sup>14</sup> During the Time of Troubles between Spain and the Netherlands, the Great Church switched hands from Catholic to Protestant to Catholic once again, before it finally emerged under permanent Dutch Reformed control in 1578 after the 'Haarlem Noon'.

In writing on the early Dutch Reformed church in the Netherlands, Schutte has reminded us of the need to disregard the contemporary view of an entrenched Calvinist identity for Holland in the first half of the seventeenth century.<sup>15</sup> In all of Holland Woltjer has stressed the position of the Reformed Church during this period as a minority among other minorities, since it was not entirely clear at this juncture that the Calvinists would take the upper hand.<sup>16</sup> In fact, in Haarlem and its environs in 1620 the government was aware of twenty active Catholic priests, as compared to the six Reformed preachers of the public church.<sup>17</sup> By approximate calculation Spaans

---

<sup>14</sup> In 1559 Pope Paul IV elevated the bishopric of Utrecht to an archbishopric and Haarlem was made a bishopric under its first bishop Nicolaas van Nieuwland. Heussen H.F. van, *Oudheden en gestichten van Kennemerland, Amstelland, Noord-Holland, en Westvriesland enz.*, tr. and ed. H.F. van Rijn (Leiden: 1721) 60–85.

<sup>15</sup> Schutte G.J., "De publieke kerk en de cultuur: theocratie van calvinistische stempel?", *De zeventiende eeuw* 8 (1992) 38.

<sup>16</sup> Woltjer J.J., "De plaats van de calvinisten in de Nederlandse samenleving", *De zeventiende eeuw* 10 (1994) 16–19. Woltjer also stresses that this was especially the case in Holland. In Zealand the Reformed Church was stronger and in Utrecht weaker. In Friesland and Groningen government pressure on the Mennonites and Catholics was somewhat stronger.

<sup>17</sup> Spaans J., *Haarlem na de Reformatie. Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijk leven, 1577–1620*,

has concluded that in the same year only about half of the Haarlem population showed a strict confessional allegiance.<sup>18</sup> The breakdown of this religious half of the population has been roughly estimated at 20% Reformed, 14% Mennonite, 12.5% Catholic, 1% Lutheran and 1% Walloon Reformed.<sup>19</sup> It is noteworthy that these subcultures managed to live in relative harmony with one another, and rather than cultivating antagonistic relationships, initially viewed themselves as all Christians living together in one or another biblical tradition.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless these numbers show just how tentative a hold the Dutch Reformed Church had on the Haarlem population at this time, an important reality to keep in mind when considering the motivation of the Calvinist church masters in redecorating the Great Church.

In an effort to garner majority public support, the Reformed Community cleverly established a flexible system of membership to accommodate various levels of commitment to the new theology. The least committed were the 'enthusiasts', or '*liefshebbers*', who were not official members of the Reformed Church, but still attended church regularly.<sup>21</sup> Originally these people were expected to join as full members after a period of time; they were considered 'in process' church members, although this process did not always come to its expected completion. Woltjer has noted that many of these 'enthusiasts' may have been secret Catholics or Mennonites, conforming to the requirement that certain government appointees maintain, at the very least, membership in the Reformed Church at the 'enthusiast' level.<sup>22</sup> Since the Reformed Church was the public church, every child brought into the church was baptized, but this in itself

---

PhD Diss., University of Leiden, 1989, *Hollandse Historische Reeks* 11 (The Hague: 1989) 84, 93; Woltjer, "De plaats van de calvinisten" (note 16) 17.

<sup>18</sup> Spaans, *Haarlem* (note 17) 104–105; Woltjer, "De plaats van de calvinisten" (note 16) 18.

<sup>19</sup> The other half of the population either attended church without becoming full-fledged members or perhaps professed a more spiritualist piety. Spaans, *Haarlem* (note 17) 299.

<sup>20</sup> Schutte, "Publieke kerk" (note 15) 37.

<sup>21</sup> Van Deursen A.Th. van, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen. Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen: 1974) 128–135; Schutte, "Publieke kerk" (note 15) 37; Woltjer, "De plaats van de calvinisten" (note 16) 18–19.

<sup>22</sup> Woltjer, "De plaats van de calvinisten" (note 16) 18.

did not constitute full membership.<sup>23</sup> Upon reaching adulthood, it was necessary to make a conscious confession of faith and submit to the jurisdiction of the local classis. An individual could then become a full confessional member, or '*belijdenislid*'. Only by accommodating ambivalent members was the Reformed Church able to secure its place in society as the foremost religion among other confessions.<sup>24</sup>

If Calvin's theology mandated the form, content and audience of art for a modest private group of believers, local history and contemporary politics required publicly accessible, civic church decoration that would not be offensive to Catholics, Mennonites, Lutherans or Jewish inhabitants of the city.

### *Siege of Haarlem Panel*

The *Siege of Haarlem* panel, the reverse of the *Last Supper* panel, owes its subject matter to this second face, the community-oriented side, of Dutch Reformed church decoration [Fig. 9].<sup>25</sup> In its non-figural, verbal iconography the *Siege of Haarlem* panel maintained its ties to Dutch Reformed ideals, as in the *Last Supper* panel, but in its content and location in the ambulatory this panel was directed toward a truly open public audience.

Formally the *Siege of Haarlem* is one of the most unusual text paintings to decorate an early Reformed church interior in the Netherlands. Its uncommon additive composition of six major sections and its unusual subject matter make it hard to categorize according to standard types like the *Last Supper* panel. The texts on the *Siege of Haarlem* panel consist of a new type of verbal praise of God [see Appendix]. Unlike the quotations and summaries from the Bible in other paintings, these six texts are heroic, rhetorician-type poetry to commemorate

<sup>23</sup> Woltjer, "De plaats van de calvinisten" (note 16) 19.

<sup>24</sup> Although the Dutch Reformed faith was declared the official public religion in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland in 1576, it was not until 1651 that the States General defined the 'true Christian Reformed religion' as the official church at a national level, calling it the glue which bound the young Republic together and, if necessary, was worth defending by force. Van Swigchem a.o., *Een huis voor het Woord* (note 9) 47.

<sup>25</sup> As the reverse of the *Last Supper* panel, the *Siege of Haarlem* panel is still in its original location in the Great Church in Haarlem.

the Spanish Siege of Haarlem and to honor God for his role in saving the people of Haarlem. The seven month Siege of Haarlem by the Spanish from December 1572 through July 1573 was a truly desperate time when many were killed in battle, others died of starvation and all were marked by deprivation. As the most recent major battle in Haarlem history the Siege took on an unparalleled importance in the collective memory of the city and was a defining event in the creation of a distinctive Haarlem identity. Intertwined in the liberation of the city from the Spanish was the story of religious freedom, or at least the ability to hold the Reformed service in public, which made this event truly of biblical proportions in contemporary perception. The war with Catholic Spain was perceived as a modern parallel to the struggle of the Israelites against foreign tyrants who worshiped idols, and the disparity in power between the Habsburg Empire and its rebellious protectorate gave the story an undeniable David and Goliath twist.<sup>26</sup>

Unlike other text paintings commissioned at the same time for the church, there are no direct citations from the books of the Bible in this panel, although biblical references abound throughout. In total the middle section consists of fifty-one lines of narrative, with couplets providing a summary of events at two day intervals, emphasizing the famine as a reason for the temporary fall to the Spanish. The two top boxes function almost as footnotes to the middle section of the text, to clarify and summarize the interpretation of the painting. The first box to the left reminds that come what may, no matter how distinguished or powerful an enemy, 'God is with us'. The *Siege of Haarlem* is therefore intended as a recent, tangible example of God's ultimate providence and evidence of God's ways with his people. Participation in the celebration of the Last Supper on the front, where faith in God was remembered and strengthened, is given con-

---

<sup>26</sup> In seventeenth-century history painting modern events were often presented to the public as typological biblical parallels. Waal H. van der, *Drie eeuwen vaderlandse geschied-uitbeelding 1500–1800. Een iconologische studie*, vol. 1 (The Hague: 1952) 23–24. For more on the Dutch Republic as the new Israel, see Groenhuis G., "Calvinism and National Consciousness: The Dutch Republic as the New Israel", *Church and State since the Reformation: Papers Delivered to the Seventh Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference*, eds. A. Duke – C.A. Tames (The Hague: 1981) 118–133; Schama S., *The Embarrassment of Riches. An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (Berkeley: 1988) 51–126.

crete example on the reverse. The right box testifies further that God can sway the bitter hearted enemies of Haarlem, as exemplified in the Spanish Siege. In the panel God's salvation and protection of his people are underscored and intended to recall other biblical examples, like the saving of Noah and, notably, the leading of his people to the Promised Land.

The foot of the *Siege of Haarlem* panel summarizes the lesson to be derived from the middle section. The foot, both literally and figuratively, is the foundation and key to the program, and it is the most explicitly biblical, and specifically Calvinist, in nature. Here, the text draws upon Old Testament examples of trials: Daniel in the lion's den, Susanna and the Elders, the Siege of Jerusalem and Nebuchadnezzar and the three youths. The painted verbal citation of the last subject in particular, Nebuchadnezzar and the three youths, charts the distance traveled in church decoration in a very brief time span. In 1575, during a brief return to Catholic control of the church, Pieter Pietersz. produced a densely arranged figural composition of the same subject for the *Bakers' Altarpiece*.<sup>27</sup> Only six years later the same story, but now painted in acceptably abstract text, would be used to heighten the anguish of Haarlemmers, and like the other examples, to establish august biblical precedents for their trials. The Siege of Jerusalem in particular could not have failed to evoke contemporary comparisons. By blending critical biblical and local historical events along a single chronological continuum, the *Siege of Haarlem* panel makes a stirring case for the biblical roots of civic pride and patriotism.

Most significantly a new audience was targeted for the *Siege of Haarlem* panel: the citizens of Haarlem, irrespective of creed. The new ornamentation in the choir was visible to the average member of the Dutch Reformed Church, who now enjoyed occasional access. But outside the choir people of all faiths were encouraged to make the church part of their daily lives and churches were often left open between services to provide space for a wide range of activities, not the least of which was simply strolling. Appropriated main churches

---

<sup>27</sup> Pieter Pietersz., *Nebuchadnezzar and the Three Youths in the Fiery Oven*, 1575, oil on panel, Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum. For a photograph and more discussion, see Van Swigchem C.A., "Kerkborden en kolomschilderingen in de St. Bavo te Haarlem, 1580-1585", *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 35 (1987) 222.

of cities became centers for the community, a place for all citizens regardless of religious affiliation.<sup>28</sup> As seen in the election of church masters, who were chosen by the church elders from nominations presented by the city government, ties between the local government and the church were much closer than in the previous era, when the Catholic Church had looked to Rome for oversight, so that churches were increasingly viewed as civic monuments.<sup>29</sup> In the nave, transepts and ambulatories seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed viewers could stretch their legs, admire the beauty of the architecture and meditate on the meanings of biblical and patriotic texts in the company of Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Mennonite, Remonstrant and Jewish citizens, among others. The larger audience no longer subscribed to a single religion, but was now a broad public bound by a common interest in local society and religious traditions that shared a common biblical basis.

If the front of the structure, the *Last Supper*, may be understood as a magnificent epitaph for Christ, the reverse of the structure, the *Siege of Haarlem*, functions as a memorial to the people of Haarlem. With the rededication of church space to new audiences, as seen in this double-sided structure, Dutch Reformed church decoration redefined the boundaries of private religious and public civic ornamentation acceptable in God's House.

### *Coda*

New notions of the boundaries of public and private space not only changed the decoration of church interiors. Calvin's ideas on this subject had broader ramifications for the function of art in seventeenth-century Dutch society. Where the value of art had once been primarily defined in terms of its ability to minimize the worshiper's

---

<sup>28</sup> Spaans, *Haarlem* (note 17) 104–105, 299; Woltjer, “De plaats van de calvinisten” (note 16) 17–18.

<sup>29</sup> Stained glass windows in churches with the coat of arms of the donor city have been written about most frequently in this regard. Van Swigchem C.A., *Een blik in de Nederlandse kerkgebouwen na de ingebruikneming voor de protestantse eredienst* (The Hague: 1970) 14–15; Van Swigchem C.A., ‘*Een goed regiment*’: *Het burgerlijke element in het vroege gereformeerde kerkinterieur* (The Hague: 1988) passim, 6–16, 24–33; and Van Swigchem a.o., *Een huis voor het Woord* (note 9) passim, 36, 69.

proximity to the divine, now purely aesthetic judgments gained validity as figural art was relocated from churches to homes and secular institutions.

Calvin distinguished between art made for church ornamentation and art made to be hung anywhere else, secular art, such as that in private dwellings and civic institutions. Calvin writes that historical art which 'instructs and admonishes' should be in the churches, while figural imagery, which offers entertainment often at the cost of better judgment, should best be kept out of God's House.<sup>30</sup> Nowhere does he dictate that figural imagery should be destroyed or hidden from sight. The correction is one of appropriate place, location as the key stimulus toward religious meditation or the primary guard against idolatrous worship, the suitable venue helping viewers to distinguish between didactic instruction and frivolous amusement. Calvin clarifies,

Nay idols themselves as long as they are in shops or workshops, are not worshiped. If a painter's shop is full of pictures, all pass them by, and if they are delighted with the view of them they do not show any sign of reverence to the paintings. But as soon as the picture is carried to another place its sacredness blinds men and so stupefies them that they do not remember that they had already seen the same painting in a profane shop.<sup>31</sup>

The importance Calvin placed on the location where art was displayed as a sign for the functional intention was one of a series of conditions that stimulated the flowering of secular art produced in the Dutch Golden Age. Much has been written on the importance of Calvinism for portraiture, landscape and a Protestant work ethic, but Calvin's theoretical distinction between art for the public church and art for the private home or secular institution should likewise receive its due. Before iconoclasm most art had been primarily devotional in character. Iconoclasm split the main tree trunk of late

---

<sup>30</sup> Calvin J., *Institutes of the Christian religion*, tr. H. Beveridge (Grand Rapids: 1989) 100.

<sup>31</sup> Calvin J., *Commentary on the First Twenty Chapters of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, tr. T. Myers, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: 1849) 286–287. Although 'sacredness' and 'profane' were Myers' choices for translation, from Calvin's perspective these words should best be understood without the Catholic sense of consecrated space and more in terms of religious and secular, or inside and outside of a church.

medieval Catholic devotional art into two branches: verbal Dutch Reformed church decoration for doctrinal instruction and figural secular art for amusement. Textual decorative art could further the lessons of the Word in churches and yet still be flexible enough to be reconfigured into figural fine art to provide lively, even grotesque entertainment in the home. The ideal of sensual beauty was accepted as an alternate goal to that of depicting divine truth—esthetic value as opposed to didactic religious instruction—so long as it was outside the boundaries of the church. That was a modern and innovative view of the potential function of art for the time and suggests the larger societal implications of Calvin's ideas for early modern divisions of urban space. And, unlike the battlefield over appropriate church decoration, the distinction between art for religious instruction and art for amusement was something that Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and even the Counter-Reformation Catholics could all agree upon.

After Netherlandish iconoclasm church decoration faced an uncertain future at best. With the commissioning of the *Last Supper/Siege of Haarlem* structure in 1581, the Dutch Reformed church masters took a significant step toward solving the problem of imprinting the Great Church in Haarlem with a clearly Reformed identity, and actions like these were mirrored throughout the young Republic. The two sides of this exceptional work exemplify the new decoration of Dutch Reformed churches: a distinctly Calvinist non-figural applied art with a strong civic component. In a society where the Dutch Reformed were only supported by at most one-fifth of the population, the Calvinist church masters were caught between the desire to build an identifiable 'brand' of religion and the need to garner public support.

So how did the Dutch Reformed church masters solve their quandary? They drew upon the complexities of early sixteenth-century reformation theology to redefine the constituencies of public and private audiences, almost paralleling the system applied to membership in the Dutch Reformed Church. Now the potential viewers would include the Reformed believer, the nominally Reformed, and the multi-confessional local public at large. By assuming a two-prong strategy of commissioning paintings that represented both religious and civic interests of the church, the Haarlem case indicates one way the Reformed church masters were able to make the new ornamentation palatable and consolidate their position as guardians of the dominant

church. Under their guidance rejected Catholic devotional art was transformed to meet the visual strictures of Calvin and evolved into a new form of church decoration, a Dutch Reformed ornamentation, that was capable of communicating its sectarian message and still appealing to a public beyond its traditional membership. In other words, the dominance of textual over figural representation, the blending of local events with biblical stories and the preference for public access over private entitlement meant no less than a true 're-formation' of the church interior.

## APPENDIX

*Texts of the Last Supper and Siege of Haarlem Panels**Anonymous, Last Supper, ca. 1581*

D'Heer Christus 't Hemelsch brood  
 Geeft 't leven door sijn dood

- 1 Cor. 11. Ick hebt vanden Heere ontfanghen dat ik u  
 ghegeven hebbe. Want de Heere Jesus inder  
 nacht doe hij verradet wert nam dat Broot danc-  
 te ende brack het ende seijde: Nemet etet, dat is mijn  
 Matt. 26. Lijf dat voor u gebroken wert. Sulcx doet tot  
 Mar. 14. mijner gedachtenisse. Desgelijcken ooc den drinckbe-  
 Luc. 22. ker na den Avontmael ende seijde: dese drinckbeker  
 is dat nieuwe Testament in mijnen Bloede; Sulcx  
 doet so dickwils als ghij het drinken sult tot mijner  
 ghedachtenisse. Want so dickwils als ghij van desen  
 Broode eten sult ende van desen drinckbeker drincken so  
 vercondiget den doot des Heeren tot dat hij coemt.

1 Corint. 10.

Den drinckbeker der dankseggingh dien wij danckseggende drin-  
 ken, is die niet de gemeijnschap des Bloets Christi, het broot  
 dat wij breken is dat niet die gemeynscap des Lichaems Christi.

---

The Lord Christ, the Heavenly bread  
 Gives life through his death

- 1 Cor. 11. For I have received from the Lord that which I  
 [23-26] have given you. Because the Lord Jesus on the  
 night in which he was betrayed took that Bread,  
 gave thanks, broke it, and said: Take, eat, that is my  
 Matt. 26. Body, which is broken for you. Do this in  
 [26] remembrance of me. In the same manner he also took the cup  
 after the Supper and said: this cup  
 Mark 14. is that new Testament in my Blood; Do  
 [22] this, whenever you drink this, in remembrance  
 Luke 22. of me. For whenever you shall eat this  
 Bread, and drink from this cup  
 [19] you announce the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Cor. 10. [16]

The cup of blessing, which we blessedly drink,  
 is it not the community of the Blood of Christ ? The bread  
 that we break, is it not the community of the Body of Christ ?

*Anonymous, Siege of Haarlem, 1581*

Soo d'Honger sLeChs geen StrIId aen bood<sup>32</sup>  
 LICht tSpaensCh geWeLd Van HaerLeM VLood

Al waer al die werelt op ons verhit  
 So sterck so fel als men mocht bedenken  
 Es Godt met ons verstaet wel dit  
 Niemand sal ons dan moghen crencken

Geen vianden hoe bitter verheret  
 Al hebbense lust te doen verdriet  
 Godt can 't veranderen ja hoe verwert  
 Texempel es claer an ons ghesiet

Den negenden decembris 1572 men las  
 Doe die schans 'tsparendam in wert genomen  
 Den elfden daer nae op dat selfde pas  
 Es don fredrico voer Haerlem gecomen  
 Met alle sijn macht en sonder scromen  
 Den achtiende bescoten sterc en crachtich  
 Den twintichsten bestormt met stout beroemen  
 Maer is afgeslagen wel hert en onsachtich  
 Den laesten ianuario daer na waerachtich  
 Es die tweede storm op die stadt gedaen  
 Die vijant weec weer onverdachtich  
 En most met scande ruymen de baen  
 Al sijn aenslagen om ons te verraen  
 Sijn te niet gheghaen somen wel sach  
 Al was sijn mening ons te belaeen  
 Met villen en braen sonder verdrach  
 God bescermde ons wonderlic op dien dach

Dit sware beleg dit seer groot ontrieven  
 Duerden een en dertich weecken also ick schat  
 Duyfkens waren doe posten, die brochten ons brieven  
 Want men doe seer qualick mocht comen int stadt  
 Een deerlicken honger die veelen maect mat  
 Overviel den burger en heeft veel volcx versleten  
 Paerden moutcoecen raepkoecken men hier adt

<sup>32</sup> Although the heading reads 'StILLd', or 'silence', it seems more likely to have originally been 'StrIId', or 'struggle', as the latter is more appropriate to the content. Moreover the chronogram is only correct if 'StrIId' is used, since 'II' equals 2 and 'ILL' totals 101. If 'StrIId' is used, the total sum of the Roman numerals is the year 1573, the end of the Siege of Haarlem.

Ja honden en catten waren wilbraet gheheten  
 Kenipcoeken souten huyden tes niet vergheten  
 Coelstruycken wingertblae was een present  
 En behalven dat noch, men over al riepen en creten  
 Niet dan alarm alarm verdt ende omtrent  
 Sware scermutsinghe voor ons noch ontbekent  
 Mosten wij aengaen tegen ons herde viant  
 In dees grote noot, in ons wterste ellent  
 Gaven wij die stadt op doer hongers verbant  
 Nie dat hijse in creegh met stormender hant

Doe nu die stadt dus op was ghegheven  
 In vijants handen soe voor es vertelt  
 Om soe te bergen ons lijf ende ons leven  
 Doe quam ons op noch al meer geweld  
 Gheen burger so slecht oock hoe ontstelt  
 Off hij most houden twe of drie soldaten  
 Die 't voort verteerden ja inboel en gelt  
 Nochtans genadiger dan som vermaten  
 Dit deedt veel burgers wat besaten  
 Hoe welse deerlick waren beswaert  
 Anno 1577 doe werden gelaten  
 Tgarnison wt stadt, op d'eerste maert  
 En onder den Prins van vromer aert  
 Quamen wij weer op dieselfde tijt  
 Als ons stadthouder lief en waert  
 Die ons tot noch toe heeft bevrijt  
 Door Goods stercke hant gebenedijt

Ghelijck God Daniel verlostent wt der wreden lewen mont  
 En Susanna beschermde voor die twe oude qua boeven  
 Jerusalem behoeft voor Antiochus ongodlick verbont  
 En die drie kinderen help uut haer pijnlick bedroeven

Soo heeft hij oock dese stadt sonder enich vertoeven  
 Wonderlicken bewaert voor soe veel vijants handen  
 Hij was de noothelper, hij ghinck ons beproeven  
 Dies moet hij gheloofst sijn in steden en in landen

---

If only the hunger had offered no struggle  
 The Spanish violence would have fled from Haarlem.

Even if all the world were angry with us,  
 So strong, so fierce, as one might imagine,  
 If God is with us, understand this is well,  
 No one will be able to harm us.

No enemies how bitter hearted,  
 Although they want to sadden us,  
 God can change them, yes, no matter how resistant,  
 The example has already happened to us.

On the ninth of December 1572, one read  
 How the bulwark of Sparendam was captured.  
 On the following eleventh, in that same place  
 Appeared Don Frederico before Haarlem  
 With all his power and without hesitation.  
 On the eighteenth, he fired strongly and powerfully.  
 On the twentieth, he attacked us with bold pride.  
 But he was turned back firmly and roughly.  
 On the last day of January after that, truly  
 The second attack on the city was made.  
 The enemy again unsuspectedly weak,  
 Had to shamefully clear the path.  
 All his attacks in order to betray us  
 Came to nothing, as one well saw.  
 Although his opinion was to burden us  
 With flaying and burning without treaty,  
 God protected us wondrously on this day.

This heavy siege, this very great deprivation,  
 Lasted thirty-one weeks as I estimate.  
 Little doves were the post who brought us letters,  
 Because one risked great harm to come into the city.  
 A true hunger which made many weary  
 Overcame the citizenry and wore out many folk.  
 Here one ate horses, oat cakes, turnip cakes  
 Yes, dogs and cats were eaten as roast game.  
 Hemp cakes, salty hides were not forgotten,  
 Heads of cabbage and vine leaves were a gift  
 And still in addition to that, people everywhere wailed and cried  
 Nothing but alarm, alarm spreading far and round,  
 Heavy fighting, for us still unknown,  
 We had to commence against our hard enemy.  
 In this time of great need, in our most extreme distress,  
 We gave up the city because of hunger,  
 Not that they conquered it with storming hand.

When now this city was given up,  
 In the hands of the enemy, as is told before,  
 In order so to rescue our bodies and our lives,  
 Then came upon us still more force,  
 Each citizen no matter how poor or distressed,

Must hold off two or three soldiers,  
Who consumed on and on, indeed furnishings and money,  
Still more humble than sometimes is measured.  
This gave many citizens something with which to be occupied  
Although they were truly burdened.  
In the year 1577, the garrison was allowed  
Out of the city, on the first of March,  
And under the Prince of pious nature  
We came again at the same time,  
As our dear and worthy Stadhouder,  
Who has freed us still until today  
By the benediction of God's strong hand.

Just as God rescued Daniel out of the cruel lion's mouth,  
And protected Susanna from the two old lechers  
So has he saved Jerusalem from the ungodly alliance of Antiochus,  
And helped these three children out of painful sorrow,

So has he also wondrously preserved this city  
Without any delay before so many enemies' hands.  
He was the helper in need, he put us to the test,  
Therefore he must be praised in cities and in countries.

*Selective Bibliography*

- CALVIN, J., *Commentary on the First Twenty Chapters of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, tr. T. Myers, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: 1849–1850).
- , *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, tr. H. Beveridge (Grand Rapids: 1989).
- DEURSEN, A.TH. VAN, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen. Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen: 1974).
- EIRE, C.M.N., *War Against the Idols. The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: 1986).
- FILEDT KOK, J.P. – HALSEMA-KUBES W., – KLOEK W.Th. (eds.), *Kunst voor de Beeldenstorm: Noordnederlandse kunst 1525–1580*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: 1986).
- FREEDBERG D., *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: 1989).
- GROENHUIS G., “Calvinism and National Consciousness: The Dutch Republic as the New Israel”, *Church and State since the Reformation: Papers Delivered to the Seventh Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference*, eds. A. Duke – C.A. Tames (The Hague: 1981) 118–133.
- MICHALSKI S., *The Reformation of the Visual Arts. The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe* (London: 1993).
- SCHAMA S., *The Embarrassment of Riches. An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (Berkeley: 1988).
- SCHUTTE G.J., “De publieke kerk en de cultuur: theocratie van calvinistische stempel?”, *De zeventiende eeuw* 8 (1992) 33–39.
- SPAANS J., *Haarlem na de Reformatie. Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijk leven, 1577–1620*, PhD Diss., University of Leiden, 1989, Hollandse Historische Reeks 11 (The Hague: 1989).
- SWIGCHEM C.A. VAN, *Een blik in de Nederlandse kerkgebouwen na de ingebruikneming voor de protestantse eredienst* (The Hague: 1970).
- , “Kerkborden en kolomschilderingen in de St. Bavo te Haarlem, 1580–1585”, *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 35 (1987) 211–223.
- , ‘Een goed regiment’. *Het burgerlijke element in het vroege gereformeerde kerkinterieur* (The Hague: 1988).
- – BROUWER T. – OS W. VAN, *Een huis voor het Woord* (The Hague: 1984).
- VELDMAN I.M., “Calvinisme en de beeldende kunst in de zeventiende eeuw”, in *Mensen van de Nieuwe Tijd. Een liber amicorum voor A. Th. van Deursen*, ed. M. Bruggeman a.o. (Amsterdam: 1996) 297–306.
- WOLTJER J.J., “De plaats van de calvinisten in de Nederlandse samenleving”, *De zeventiende eeuw* 10 (1994) 3–23.

*This page intentionally left blank*

‘A SERPENT IN THE BOSOM OF OUR DEAR  
FATHERLAND:’ REFORMED REACTION TO THE  
HOLLAND MISSION IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Christine Kooi

During the 1620s and 1630s the Reformed consistory of Dordrecht had watched with increasing dismay as ‘papists’ practiced their ‘idolatries’ more and more brazenly within the walls of Holland’s oldest town. Despite their repeated complaints, the preachers and elders on the consistory noted with exasperation that the sheriff [*schout*] and the burgomasters were still doing nothing to stop the alarming rise of Catholic activity within the city. Now, in the mid-winter of 1637, they could contain themselves no longer. On 19 February the consistory addressed a long letter of complaint to the ‘honorable, wise, most prudent lords’ of Dordrecht, cataloguing the baleful effects of popish superstition on the spiritual health of the city and the nation and, by implication, rebuking the magistrates for allowing it to flourish.

In lachrymose terms the brethren described their grief and pain at witnessing the spread of superstition in the city, at the ‘intolerable impudence’ of the papists unchecked by law or sanction. At least two Catholic priests, one of them a Jesuit no less, lived in town like wolves among the sheep and openly presided over Catholic conventicles. Their ‘altars of Baal’ were multiplying, at which they celebrated their ‘idolatrous mass . . . not secretly but in public, not by night but by clear day, not with a small but a notable and considerable number of people.’ All this occurred before the scandalized eyes of the good Reformed burghers of Dordrecht. These ‘mass-priests’ laughed at the church and the law, boasting they ‘made things good’ with the sheriff with payoff money and mocking the anti-Catholic placards issued by the States of Holland. More alarmingly, Dordrecht’s papists, the remonstrance hinted darkly, also seemed to enjoy the favor of ‘notable’ persons in the city.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Stadsarchief Dordrecht, Archief Nederlands-Hervormde Gemeente (hereafter SAD NHG), Acta kerkenraad, 19 Feb. 1637.

As if all that were not enough, the Catholics also employed even more sinister means to insinuate themselves among the townsfolk. Their *kloppjes*, unmarried Catholic women who lived together in common households—described by the Reformed brethren as ‘a new sort of beguine’—were trying to seduce innocent children and servants away from true religion into popery. They crept into homes and tried to shake the faith of defenseless souls on their sickbeds. Likewise priests tried to sneak into sick people’s houses to offer them extreme unction (or ‘oil them,’ as the remonstrance put it). One priest even had the temerity to enter the house of a Reformed deacon while he and his wife were at church and try to convert their housemaid.<sup>2</sup>

All these excesses, the preachers and elders sighed, had brought their patience to an end. The papists were upsetting the Reformed congregation, so much so that they feared that anti-Catholic mob violence might break out if timely action were not taken. The town government had to do its civic and patriotic duty. We are at war with the tyranny of Spain, they reminded the magistracy, which wishes to rob us of true Christian religion: do not let such idolatry and superstition nestle in the ‘bosom and heart of our dear fatherland.’ A Christian government must root out this ‘evil gangrene and devouring cancer.’ Enforcing the anti-Catholic placards was necessary and godly work, the brethren concluded piously, and they urged the magistrates to step in and zealously protect Christian souls from this most serious and deadly peril.<sup>3</sup>

This 1637 remonstrance by Dordrecht’s preachers and elders nicely encapsulates the major themes of the Dutch Reformed Church’s polemic against the Holland Mission in the seventeenth century. Catholics priests and missionaries working within Holland spread idolatry and superstition amongst the population. They connived and conspired insidiously at undermining true religion. Their pestilential efforts poisoned the health of the body politic. They were allied with foreign tyranny. And despite all the placards and injunctions against them, they impudently and brazenly continued to practice Catholic ritual. The Holland Mission represented, in sum, a mortal threat to the polity and society of the Dutch Republic.

---

<sup>2</sup> SAD NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 19 Feb. 1637.

<sup>3</sup> SAD NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 19 Feb. 1637.

One of the 'intersections' the Dutch Reformed Church found itself negotiating in the aftermath of the Revolt against Spain was the persistence of Catholic worship in the officially Protestant Dutch Republic. After its initial dislocation and disestablishment in the 1570s, when churches were handed over to Reformed congregations and priests forced into retirement or exile, the Catholic Church regrouped itself into the Holland Mission by the 1590s, led by a papally appointed Apostolic Vicar. By the 1620s the Mission, as well as the major regular orders, had successfully re-established a thriving, if semi-clandestine, Catholic parochial system in the cities, towns and villages of the officially Protestant Dutch Republic. Thanks to their energies and efforts, the transition from a martyred church to a missionary church was an unmitigated success. Anti-Catholic placards issued by the States-General and States of Holland in the late sixteenth century had prohibited Catholic worship, but the enforcement of these edicts was an entirely local concern, and local missionaries often had arrangements with town officials to allow them to minister to their faithful unmolested as long as they caused no public disorder. By the middle of the seventeenth century Catholicism was the most vigorous of all of the myriad confessional subcultures in the Dutch Republic.<sup>4</sup>

To be sure, none of this sat very well with the leadership of the Reformed Church. Theirs was the Republic's only officially recognized and supported public church; it monopolized all ecclesiastical property and its ministers were paid from publicly administered funds.<sup>5</sup> The Church's confessions taught its members to oppose 'false' religion and 'popery' wherever they found it. It was in opposition to Catholicism and to what Reformed Protestants considered its corruptions that many of their ancestors and fellow believers had suffered persecution, exile and even martyrdom, and the idea that its adherents might be allowed to persist in their idolatries in the 'new Israel' of the Dutch Republic was, as the aggrieved Dordrecht brethren insisted, intolerable. Complaints by Reformed consistories, classes and

---

<sup>4</sup> Spiertz M., "Priest and Layman in a Minority Church: The Roman Catholic Church in the Northern Netherlands 1592-1686" in W.J. Shields - Diana Blackwood (eds.), *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay* (Oxford: 1989) 287-301; Kooi C., "Popish Impudence: The Perseverance of the Catholic Faithful in Calvinist Holland, 1572-1620", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 26 (1995) 75-85.

<sup>5</sup> On the anomalous nature of the Dutch Reformed Church's political status, see: Deursen A. van, *Bavieren en slijkgeuzen: Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen 1974) 13-33.

synods about Catholic missionary activity began almost immediately in the late 1500s and reached their highest pitch in the middle decades of the seventeenth century. This period coincided with the Holland Mission's era of greatest expansion and activity since Holland's revolt against Habsburg Spain in 1572. Throughout the seventeenth century the Reformed Church continued, loudly and persistently, to decry and denounce Catholic missionary activity within the Republic. The bitter Protestant polemic of protest and opposition that had begun in the sixteenth-century Reformation, born out the experience of repression and exile, was in the following century translated into an equally passionate and virulent anti-Catholic rhetoric that formed an important part of the confessional culture of the early modern Reformed Church in Holland.

This rhetoric is worth exploring, for it articulated the official position of the Reformed Church regarding Catholicism and also, by extension, revealed that church's sense of itself both as a confessional community and as a member of Dutch society and polity.<sup>6</sup> This rhetorical relationship of public hostility did not necessarily mirror the reality of interactions between Protestants and Catholics in daily life (which could be quite amicable), but it did become an essential feature of the religious culture of Holland and the rest of the Dutch Republic, a religious culture whose other major characteristic was, paradoxically enough, diversity. Indeed, in such a variegated religious environment the Reformed Church was in a sense forced to employ formal rhetorical hostility. Their polemical stance served the confessional ends of the Reformed, by creating a clear boundary between truth and error or, more viscerally, between 'us' and 'them.' Condemning Catholicism as 'idolatry' or 'superstition' permitted the Reformed Church to demonstrate its rejection of ecclesiastical corruption. Idolatry was false faith and was therefore discredited in the minds of the Reformed. Antagonism and the polemic that went with it thus affirmed confessional identity.<sup>7</sup> This was necessary in a society where, as many outsiders noted, all manner of religious attachment could be found.

---

<sup>6</sup> A similar rhetorical culture emerged contemporaneously in Puritan England; see Lake P., "Anti-popery: the Structure of a Prejudice", in R. Cust – A. Hughes (eds.), *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603–1642* (London: 1989) 72–77.

<sup>7</sup> For a general discussion of the polemical uses of 'superstition,' see "Introduction", in H. Parish – W.G. Naphy (eds.), *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe*, (Manchester: 2002) 14–15.

Hence the steady stream of invective against 'idolatry' that flowed from Reformed quarters right from the start. The idolatrous nature of Catholic worship was a continuous theme in Reformed rhetoric. The Church kept a sharp eye out for vestigial popish practices everywhere. The national synod held at Middelburg in 1581, for example, rejected the practice of kneeling at communion so as to avoid the 'danger of idolatry [of the bread and wine].'<sup>8</sup> The Dordrecht consistory requested in 1603 that the burgomasters remove a large stone cross in the municipal cemetery, because sometimes 'superstitious' people knelt down before it.<sup>9</sup> In a 1636 pamphlet the provincial synod of South-Holland lobbied the States of Holland to do something about spreading Catholicism, warning of 'the violent and wanton encroachment of popish idolatry' onto the province's cities and countryside. The language of the tract was rich with Old Testament allusions, as befitted a confessional community that identified so strongly with the Jews of ancient Israel. For these most devoted Calvinists, their recently won promised land was also beset by idolaters on all sides. The ministers of the synod bemoaned the presence of Catholic priests in their cities: 'What is this but the building of altars of Baal next to the temple of the true God of Israel?'<sup>10</sup> The fruits of reformation, the pamphlet concluded, should not be the mixing of 'the true God with the idol [*den waren Godt met den Afgodt*].'<sup>11</sup> In 1644 the consistory of Amsterdam likewise supplicated its burgomasters to rid the city of idolatry, 'a spiritual whoredom which especially angers God.' Invoking the two unimpeachable cultural authorities of the seventeenth century, biblical history and classical antiquity, the Amsterdam preachers and elders reminded the city fathers that whenever the Israelites had conquered a new land or city, God had sternly commanded them to destroy all idols; in a similar manner God-fearing Roman emperors such as Constantine and Theodosius had purged the temples of pagan idols and their priests.<sup>12</sup> If the Reformed were to preside over a righteous nation, then godly magistrates were obliged to erase the corruptions of the past.

---

<sup>8</sup> C. Hooijer (ed.), *Oude kerkordeningen der Nederlandsche Hervormde Gemeente (1563–1638)* (Zaltbommel: 1865) 212.

<sup>9</sup> SAD NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 29 May 1603.

<sup>10</sup> *Tweede remonstrantie tegens den gheweldigen ende moedt-willigen inbreuck der paepscher afgoderye, soo in steden als ten platten lande van Zuydt-Hollandt* (The Hague: 1636) 10.

<sup>11</sup> *Tweede remonstrantie* (note 10) 36.

<sup>12</sup> Gemeentearchief Amsterdam NHG [hereafter GAA NHG], Acta kerkenraad, 31 April 1644.

A strong undercurrent within the Reformed antipathy to idolatry was a sense of almost physical revulsion. The Reformed Church believed that Catholicism posed an organic threat. Crosses or candles on coffins, kneeling at gravesides, processions, Catholic symbols on signboards—all such visible, material traces of vestigial Catholicism were particularly noisome to Reformed churchmen, and classes and synods objected to them time and again. With a barely suppressed shudder the provincial synod of South-Holland resolved in 1583 to complain to the bailiff [*baljuw*] of Rijnland about popish activities around the former chapel of Wilsveen, a late medieval devotional site: surely he could do something about the ‘pilgrimages and similar horrible [*gruwelijke*] superstitions’ that persisted there.<sup>13</sup> In 1588 the Leiden sheriff Foy van Brouhoven, a Reformed Church member, discovered a number of Catholic sacramental objects hidden in a private home; in his formal indictment of the homeowner he made no effort to conceal his disgust at uncovering these devices of ‘superstitious, popish, sickening idolatry. . . .’<sup>14</sup> A Calvinist widow in the same city in 1597 complained to the magistracy about the activities of her Catholic neighbors, describing them as ‘members of the devil [*lidmaten des duvels*]’ who endangered every ‘member of Christ [*lidtmaet Christi*].’<sup>15</sup> Dordrecht’s preachers and elders complained in 1666 about the ‘the blasphemous celebration of the papist mass, in which the tabernacle of God is insulted, when they present the great and glorious Son of God, King of Life, our Savior in the form of a wafer and piece of bread, that can be spoiled and violated by worms and vermin.’<sup>16</sup> The material quality of Catholicism in particular exercised its Reformed antagonists. Indeed that very physicality, with its possibility of corruption and decay, was what made it idolatrous in Reformed eyes. Idolatry was a threat to the health of the body of Christ—it poisoned and enfeebled. Noting the flourishing of the Holland Mission in 1664, the classes of South-Holland ‘complained out of a deep feeling in their souls about the daily growth and increase in the soul-, church-, land- and all-destroying idolatry of

<sup>13</sup> J. Reitsma – S.D. van Veen (eds.), *Acta der Provinciale en Particuliere Synoden, gehouden in de Noordelijke Nederlanden gedurende de jaren 1572–1620* (Groningen: 1893) 2: 220.

<sup>14</sup> Gemeentearchief Leiden, Rechterlijk archief, Crimineel vonnisboek no. 3, 8 June 1588, fols. 149–151v.

<sup>15</sup> Kooi C., “Popish Impudence” (note 4) 77.

<sup>16</sup> SAD NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 8 February 1666.

popery. . . .<sup>17</sup> The visceral reaction of the most sectarian Calvinists to Catholic worship revealed the extent to which they identified themselves according to their opposition to a discredited but still dangerous set of beliefs and practices. To them the Holland Mission was spreading a disease or poison that infested their confessionally cleansed land.

The insidious nature of the Holland Mission was also a repeated theme of the Reformed Church's polemic against it. The Mission was a conspiracy to rob true Christians of their spiritual liberty. In 1606 the South-Holland synod meeting in Gorcum declared that no priests should be allowed to practice their 'popish exercises' on 'Holland's soil' and resolved to petition the States-General about priests being allowed to live 'freely' in towns after paying contribution money to civic officials—this 'cover' had permitted them to spread their superstitions 'to the injury of the religion and of the land.'<sup>18</sup> Holland's Reformed consistories noted with consternation an increased influx of priests, in particular the much-detested Jesuits, both in their cities and throughout the land in general.<sup>19</sup> The Dordrecht consistory described popery as 'a serpent . . . in the bosom of our dear fatherland.'<sup>20</sup> The attractions of idolatry and superstition, the Reformed Church feared, would seduce the simple and the innocent away from true religion. Preachers had to act aggressively against the blandishments of superstition, as the South-Holland synod put it in 1651: 'in the sermons one should paint the naked horrors of popery before the eyes of the congregation, warning them to be on their guard.'<sup>21</sup> *Kloppjes*, single Catholic women who lived in convent-like communities but took no formal vows and who often aided priests in their pastoral work, were in particular accused of insinuating themselves into families and seducing children away from true religion.<sup>22</sup> The Delft consistory, for example, alleged in 1639 that the son of one of its church members had been spirited away by a local *kloppje*

<sup>17</sup> W.P.C. Knuttel (ed.), *Acta der particuliere synoden van Zuid-Holland 1621–1700* (The Hague: 1912) 2: 319.

<sup>18</sup> Reitsma J. – Veen S.D. van, *Acta* (note 13) 3: 251.

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, GAA NHG, *Acta kerkenraad*, 7 April 1608.

<sup>20</sup> SAD NHG, *Acta kerkenraad*, 8 February 1666.

<sup>21</sup> Knuttel W.P.C., *Acta Zuid-Holland* (note 17) 3: 235.

<sup>22</sup> Monteiro M., *Geestelijke maagden. Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland* (Hilversum: 1994) 51.

to be raised Catholic.<sup>23</sup> Likewise the Gouda brethren accused a local *klopje* of bringing a priest to an ailing church member's bedside to administer Catholic sacraments.<sup>24</sup>

Part of the treacherousness that Reformed divines detected in the Holland Mission was what they regarded as its association with foreign tyranny, be it Spanish or Roman. Because of government toleration of Catholic missionaries, Reformed leaders of the South-Holland synod argued in 1636, the Republic could expect nothing but 'eternal slavery under the yoke of the Antichrist.'<sup>25</sup> The missionaries active in the cities and villages of Holland were, they claimed, nothing more than 'sworn vassals of the Roman court.'<sup>26</sup> The Society of Jesus in particular was singled out by the synod for suspicion of pro-Spanish sympathies; the Jesuits recognized Spanish claims to the Netherlands as lawful, and in their conventicles did not lead prayers for the States-General but for the King of Spain.<sup>27</sup> A return to popery, according to this line of thinking, could very well herald a return to Habsburg overlordship, thus undoing all the struggle and sacrifice of the Revolt and Reformation.

If the idolatrous nature of Catholicism was one of the major themes of Reformed polemic by the mid-seventeenth century, then another was its insolence. Popery was not only wrong; it also gave offense. The Dutch Republic's anti-Catholic placards, however, applied only to worship and not belief—exercising the Catholic faith was illegal, but adhering to it was not. Accordingly, the Reformed Church increasingly focused its rhetoric on the Holland Mission's violations of those placards. Time and again Calvinist ecclesiastics complained about the 'license' of Catholic priests, who flouted the placards by administering the sacraments and offering pastoral care to their congregations. Reformed complaints fairly overflowed with shrill indignation over the papists' '*stouticheden*' or impudence, that they had the audacity to flout the placards and trespass into the public, communal spaces that the Reformed regarded as exclusively their own. As the 1636 South-Holland synod's remonstrance put it, the papists were

---

<sup>23</sup> Gemeentearchief Delft [hereafter GAD] NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 19 September 1639.

<sup>24</sup> Archief Hervormde Gemeente Gouda [hereafter AHGG], Acta kerkenraad, 11 May 1651.

<sup>25</sup> *Tweede remonstrantie* (note 10) 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Tweede remonstrantie* (note 10) 12.

<sup>27</sup> *Tweede remonstrantie* (note 10) 19.

not content just to practice their idolatries in secret 'here and there in corners' but instead brazenly worshiped 'publicly in the light of day, in sight of everybody . . . to the deep distress of thousands of pious patriots.'<sup>28</sup> In the same year Dordrecht's Calvinists condemned the effrontery of that town's Catholics, who, 'carrying their books and lecterns' in plain sight under their arms, met and worshipped openly, in multiple locations, in groups as large as a hundred, without law officers doing a thing about it.<sup>29</sup> *Klopjes* in particular, lamented the Haarlem preacher Samuel Ampzing, walked openly in their distinctive habits as if 'they lived in papist cities and lands.'<sup>30</sup> In Amsterdam the consistory complained that papist conventicles were 'practically public.'<sup>31</sup> The fact that popery was visible was almost as bad as the fact that it existed at all. In Haarlem reports reached an appalled consistory in late 1644 of Catholic gatherings in a house right near the homes of two burgomasters and a preacher, taking place practically under their noses.<sup>32</sup> The open sale of crucifixes and paternosters in the city market infuriated the Gouda consistory in 1646.<sup>33</sup> Manifestations of superstition even invaded the churches on occasion; the Amsterdam consistory objected strenuously in 1645 when it learned that the organist of the Old Church had revived an old, pre-reformation Christmas tradition during one of his evening concerts: bringing a cradle into the church and inviting people to come sing carols and 'rock' the baby Jesus.<sup>34</sup> The scandalized Delft brethren complained of popish images and prints hanging openly for sale in a local bookshop.<sup>35</sup> The Dordrecht consistory learned to its consternation that at the funeral of one of the city's notables 'the superstitions of popery were publicly committed, that before the very eyes of the magistrates and sheriff candles stood burning by the body.'<sup>36</sup> The consistory of Leiden in the early 1620s complained to

---

<sup>28</sup> *Tweede remonstrantie* (note 10) 7.

<sup>29</sup> SAD NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 20 January 1636.

<sup>30</sup> Ampzing S., *Suppressie vande vermeende vergaderinge der Jesuuyteszen door Urbanus VIII by den gedoge Gods Paus van Romen: met eenige poëtische-theologische bedenkingen* (Haarlem: 1632) 3.

<sup>31</sup> GAA NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 15 July 1638.

<sup>32</sup> Archiefdienst voor Kennemerland NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 27 December 1644.

<sup>33</sup> AHGG, Acta kerkenraad, 20 September 1646.

<sup>34</sup> GAA NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 12 January 1645; Klönne B.H., "Amstelodamensia. Het kinderke wiegen in de Oude Kerk", *De Katholiek* 104 (1899) 262–274.

<sup>35</sup> GAD NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 31 August 1640.

<sup>36</sup> SAD NHG, Acta kerkenraad, 11 March 1638.

its magistrates about Catholic services being conducted in municipal hospitals.<sup>37</sup> The enraged reaction of Reformed divines to the presence of Catholicism in the common spaces of civic life indicated how seriously they took their role as the land's only public church. They regarded the public sphere as their own.

The toleration of the Holland Mission—indeed, the flourishing of it in the first half of the 1600s—was a fact that Reformed leaders had a great deal of difficulty countenancing. Toleration to them was slipping into license; the land was in danger of falling victim to its own freedoms. Christian magistrates were supposed to protect the souls of their citizens from ‘false doctrine, heresy and idolatry,’ but instead the Republic was becoming ‘a confused Babel of all kinds of sects.’<sup>38</sup> In 1643 at a meeting of the South-Holland synod the representatives of Gouda warned darkly of a sinister plot by the Mission to undermine Reformed resolve: with their attacks the Reformed Church priests were introducing ‘looseness, neutrality, yes, even libertinism in doctrine and morals and thereby preparing the way for the restoration of popery, or at least to a syncretism, moderation and intrigue with the same . . .’<sup>39</sup> Here lay the root of Reformed fears: the perils of confessional indifference or mixing. The Reformed leadership worried that the Republic was losing its spiritual identity in the face of a reinvigorated and tolerated Catholicism. And in the process the Reformed Church might well lose its own spiritual identity. This was a country the Reformed considered theirs: ‘the true reformed religion is always and for all time and for all true lovers of the fatherland the foremost support (next to the government) of this state. . . .’<sup>40</sup> Reformed Protestants believed that the Revolt against Spain and the Reformation had won *them* the public sphere. That years after this triumph Catholics would try to insinuate their way back into communal life offended them on any number of levels, doctrinal, cultural, social and psychological.

Toward the close of the seventeenth century Reformed leaders would slowly and grudgingly reconcile themselves to the government's toleration of Catholic belief, but evident manifestations of supersti-

---

<sup>37</sup> Kooi C., *Liberty and Religion: Church and State in Leiden's Reformation, 1572–1620* (Leiden: 2000) 192.

<sup>38</sup> *Tweede remonstrantie* (note 10) 24–25.

<sup>39</sup> Knuttel W.P.C., *Acta Zuid-Holland* (note 17) 2: 243.

<sup>40</sup> Algemeen Rijksarchief, Oud-Synodaal Archief, no. 465, pp. 7, 13.

tion they still fiercely denounced. As long as such evidence of popery was so conspicuous their Reformed land would not look completely Reformed—it reminded them that the reformation of soul and society was at best an uncompleted and at worst an endangered process. The Holland Mission acted as a kind of rhetorical foil for the Reformed; its presence in the Dutch Republic served their perception of themselves as the true church. It also reminded them, more bitterly, that the Christian magistracy that the Revolt had won them evinced a barely lukewarm enthusiasm for such godly reformation. The danger of ‘syncretism’ was therefore ever present. Reformed Protestants in the early modern Dutch Republic found themselves, despite all their victories and privileges, in danger of becoming one more confession in a multiconfessional society. They were living in a society whose dominant religious feature was not Protestantism but pluralism.

*Selective Bibliography*

- AMPZING S., *Suppressie vande vermeynde vergaderinge der Jesuwytessen door Urbanus VIII by den gedogde Gods Paus van Romen* (Haarlem: 1632).
- DEURSEN A.Th. VAN, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen: Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen: 1974).
- FRIJHOFF W., "Dimensions de la coexistence confessionnelle", in C. Berkvens-Stevelinck – J. Israel – G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes (eds.), *The Emergence of Tolerance in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: 1997).
- FRIJHOFF W. – SPIES M., *1650: Bevochten eendracht. Nederlandse cultuur in Europese context* (The Hague: 1999).
- GRELL O.P. – SCRIBNER B. (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge: 1996).
- KOOI C., "Popish Impudence: The Perseverance of the Catholic Faithful in Calvinist Holland, 1572–1620", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 26 (1995) 75–85.
- KNUTTTEL W.P.C. (ed.), *Acta der particuliere synoden van Zuid-Holland 1621–1700*, 4 vols. (The Hague: 1908–1910, 1912).
- LAKE P., "Anti-popery: The Structure of a Prejudice", in Richard Cust – A. Hughes (eds.), *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics, 1603–1642* (London: 1989).
- MONTEIRO M., *Geestelijke maagden. Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland* (Hilversum: 1994).
- MOOIJ C. DE, *Geloof kan bergen verzetten. Reformatie en katholieke herleving te Bergen op Zoom 1577–1795* (Hilversum: 1998).
- POLLMANN J., *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic: The Reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641)* (Manchester: 1999).
- PRAK M., *Gouden Eeuw. Het raadsel van de Republiek* (Nijmegen: 2002).
- PRICE J.L., *Dutch Society 1588–1713* (London: 2000).
- REITSMA J. – VEEN S.D. VAN (eds.), *Acta der provinciale en particuliere synoden, gehouden in de Noordelijke Nederlanden gedurende de jaren 1572–1620*, Vols. 2, 3 (Groningen: 1893–1894).
- ROGIER L.J., *Geschiedenis van het katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1947).
- SPIERTZ M., "Priest and Layman in a Minority Church: The Roman Catholic Church in the Northern Netherlands 1592–1686", in *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*, W.J. Shields – D. Blackwood (eds.), (Oxford: 1989).
- TRACY J.D., "With and Without the Counter-Reformation: The Catholic Church in the Spanish Netherlands and the Dutch Republic, 1580–1650", *Catholic Historical Review* 71 (1985) 547–575.
- Tweede remonstrantie tegens den gheweldigen ende moeddt-willigen inbreuck der paepscher afgoderye, soo in steden als ten platten lande van Zuydt-Hollandt* (The Hague: 1636).
- WOLTJER J.J., "De plaats van de calvinisten in de Nederlandse samenleving", *De zeventiende eeuw* 10 (1994) 3–23.

OBEDIENCE WITH AN ATTITUDE.  
LAITY AND CLERGY IN THE DUTCH CATHOLIC  
CHURCH OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Charles H. Parker

In 1612, the small, embattled congregation of Catholics in Leeuwarden, Friesland not only faced the usual harassment from the political establishment, but in February their priest, Martin Amandi, also accused them of resisting his ecclesiastical authority. During the ensuing exchanges with the church hierarchy, several leaders from the congregation expressed their frustration with the clergy to Sasbout Vosmeer, apostolic vicar for the United Provinces.

We hope the complaints that we have made will not be considered as pretended dissimulation. As always, our complaints still are that, at best, we are not understood in the least and we are threatened with the most extreme measures. Finally, we are against those who do not heed your admonitions, instructions, warnings, who even through other methods still are not brought into obedience. But they are not among us, so your methods have proven to be excessive.<sup>1</sup>

In this letter of protest, these Frisian Catholics were affirming allegiance to clerical authority even as they were criticizing clerics for misusing that authority. Their exasperation actually grew out of a commitment to clerical leadership, intimating the central role that the priesthood occupied in lay Catholic identity in the seventeenth century, a period of reform, revival, and adversity for Catholicism in the United Provinces.

The topic of lay-clerical relations in Counter-Reformation Europe has provided historians a useful means to examine the practical give and take between universal reform programs and local religious traditions. The transformation of the clergy into a corps of professionally trained and morally disciplined pastors, as incremental and uneven as it was, nevertheless marked an important turning point in the practice of Roman Catholic Christianity. Mandated by Trent and

---

<sup>1</sup> OBC. 11, Leeuwarden to Vosmeer, July 19, 1612.

sparked by new religious orders, clerical reform became essential to the broad effort at lay re-Catholicization in early modern Europe. Historians have made considerable strides in tracing this long-term process and its significance for lay religious identity.

Much of the scholarship on the Counter-Reformation has cast the experiences and needs of most lay men and women as alien to the aims of the church and its clerics. Studies pertaining to lay-clerical relations in France, Spain, and Italy have called attention to the basic incompatibility, and often hostility, between the institutional church and lay religious traditions.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, another line of inquiry has focused on the joint efforts by ecclesiastical and temporal authorities to impose greater discipline on an unruly and uncooperative populace.<sup>3</sup> This extensive scholarship has demonstrated that the Catholic Church pushed an ambitious program of clerical authority at odds with traditional lay practices and that the Counter-Reformation proceeded with the support of state power.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, historians are also growing increasingly conscious of overlapping lay and clerical aspirations, wide regional variations within Catholic territories, and local factors in shaping religious identity. Studies in Iberia, for example, have pointed to the idiosyncratic

---

<sup>2</sup> For example, Delumeau J., *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire: a new view of the Counter-Reformation* (Phildelphia: 1977) 1–46; Muchembled R., *Popular culture and elite culture in France 1400–1750*, trans. L. Cochrane (Baton Rouge: 1985) 183–86; Hoffman P., *Church and community in the diocese of Lyon, 1500–1789* (New Haven: 1984) 98–138; Barnes A., “The social transformation of the French parish clergy, 1500–1800”, in *Culture and identity in early modern Europe (1500–1800)*, ed. B. Diefendorf – C. Hesse (Ann Arbor: 1993) 139–58; Poska A., *Regulating the people: the Catholic Reformation in seventeenth-century Spain* (Boston: 1998) 1–10; Hsia R. Po-Chia, *Society and religion in Münster, 1535–1618* (New Haven: 1984) 150–76; Boer W. de, *Conquest of the soul: confession, discipline, and public order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Boston: 2001) 327–30.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Schilling H., “Confessional Europe”, in *Handbook of European history, 1400–1600. Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation*, 2 vols., ed. Th.A. Brady Jr. – H.A. Oberman – J.D. Tracy (Grand Rapids: 1996), vol. 2 *Visions, programs, outcomes* 641–82; Reinhard W., “Reformation, Counter-Reformation and the early modern state: a reassessment”, *Catholic Historical Review* 75 (1989) 383–404; Hsia R. Po-Chia, *Social discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe, 1550–1750* (London: 1989) 122–73; Oestreich G., *Neostoicism and the Early Modern state*, ed. Br. Oestreich – H.G. Koenigsburger, trans. D. McLintock (Cambridge: 1982) 7; Burke P., *Popular culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: 1978) 207–22; Farr J., “The pure and disciplined body: hierarchy, morality, and symbolism in France during the Catholic Reformation”, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 21 (1991) 391–414.

<sup>4</sup> Hsia R. Po-Chia, *The world of Catholic renewal, 1540–1770* (New York: 1998) 42–79; Mullett M., *The Catholic reformation* (New York: 1999) 142–68.

character of religious expression particular to each town and village. More recently, Marc Forster's work in southwest Germany has also shown that Catholic revival took place without the strong presence of state authority, that reform incorporated local religious customs, and that the laity actively supported a strong clerical presence.<sup>5</sup>

The United Provinces offers a unique context to examine the interaction of laity and clergy in a context of religious conflict and confessional coexistence. There were few places in post-Reformation Europe where lay folk possessed the range of confessional choices as the people of the Dutch Republic. Over the course of the sixteenth century, all of the major religious currents of the Reformation, such as Lutherans, Mennonites, spiritualists of all sorts, and Calvinists, had swept into the Low Countries and gained believers who formed their own confessional networks and communities. By the late sixteenth century, the United Provinces was indeed a crossroads of religious belief, as the essays in this volume attest.

Although the States-General did ban all activities associated with Catholicism by 1581, even contemporary Catholic leaders called attention to the uneven enforcement of anti-Catholic placards, the connived arrangements with local authorities, and the fairly wide degree of peaceful coexistence in the province of Holland. Yet even in the most favorable circumstances for Catholics, worship took place in private homes, often under the cover of night, and only after the bribery of local officials.<sup>6</sup> Even then, it was not uncommon for a priest to be seized, roughed up, thrown into jail, ransomed at an exorbitant price, and expelled from the country. Lay Catholics endured the periodic shake down, theft, and vandalism of sacred property. Outside of the province of Holland, conditions for Catholics were generally much worse.

Thus, the cause of Catholic reform in the United Provinces faced an odd set of obstacles, confessional competition and official antagonism, a combination that was largely unknown in other parts of Europe. Dutch men and women had to choose to become Catholic

---

<sup>5</sup> Christian W., *Local religion in sixteenth-century Spain* (Princeton: 1981) 148–80; Forster M., *Catholic revival in the age of the Baroque: religious identity in southwest Germany, 1550–1750* (Cambridge, UK: 2001) 152–83.

<sup>6</sup> See Hsia R. Po-Chia – Nierop H. van (eds.), *Calvinism and religious toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, UK: 2002); Kaplan B., “Fictions of privacy: house chapels and the spatial accommodation of religious dissent in Early Modern Europe”, *American Historical Review* 107 (2002) 1031–42.

and to remain Catholic, at a time and place in which religious loyalty came at a price. For that reason, Catholics, like those in Leeuwarden, demonstrated a thoroughgoing commitment to Baroque Catholicism that compelled them to place high demands on their clergy. This essay will sketch out some of the chief ways that lay folk interacted with their priests to suggest the importance of the clergy in Dutch lay identity. To begin, however, a brief sketch of the reorganization of the Dutch Catholic Church after the change in government is necessary to understand lay-clerical relations in the seventeenth century.

The sweeping anti-Catholic legislation of the early 1580s dealt a major legal blow to the Roman faith in the United Provinces. All religious services, indeed all Catholic assemblies, became illegal; church properties were secularized and placed at the disposal of municipal and provincial governments. The States-General banned all non-native priests and no priest could perform any Roman rite.<sup>7</sup> Though the Dutch government guaranteed 'freedom of conscience' to all Dutch people, it was illegal for Catholics to practice their religion. Long before this legal assault, Catholic devotion had undergone serious decline over the course of the sixteenth century, which, in part, had grown out of dissatisfaction with the quality of the parish clergy. Efforts to implement higher clerical standards had barely gotten underway when the tumult of the Revolt convinced most priests to flee the country or take up another line of work. By 1600, only 70 practicing priests remained, most of whom were concentrated in the province of Holland in the region around Haarlem and Delft.<sup>8</sup>

Although proscribed by law and deprived of priests as well as properties, Roman Catholicism in the United Provinces made a remarkable turnaround in the early seventeenth century. The priests

---

<sup>7</sup> *Groot Placaet-Boek, inhoudende de placaten ende ordonnantien van de Hoogh-Mog. Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden ende vande Ed. Groot Mog. Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt, mitsgaders van Ed. Mog. Heeren Staten van Zeelandt* (The Hague: 1658-1770) 1, 193-94, 199-200, 203-4, 211-13, 219-20, 223-24, 217-18, 227-28; *Nederlandsch Placcaet-Boeck: Waerinne alle voornaemste placcaten, ordonnatien, accorden ende andere acten ende monumenten, uijt-ghegeven bij EE Hoog-Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenigde Nederlantsche Provintien* (Amsterdam: 1644) 1, 179-82, 344-48, 435-38.

<sup>8</sup> Post R., *Kerkelijke Verhouding in Nederland vóór de Reformatie van 1500 tot 1580* (Utrecht: 1954) 87-96; Rogier L., *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1947) 1, 16.

working in the area around Haarlem and Delft organized themselves and formed the basis of what later would become known as the Holland Mission, an association that promoted the Catholic faith in the United Provinces. Under the leadership of capable and rigorous apostolic vicars, the Mission recreated the clergy and refashioned the Dutch church.

The loss of endowments and clergy obviously created a crisis in administering sacraments to the laity and posed a critical obstacle to reestablishing pastoral care. Yet at the same time, the demise of a patronage system with entrenched dynastic interests and the disappearance of a less than stellar clerical corps provided the church hierarchy the opportunity to train a new generation of priests in a Tridentine mold without the impediments that dogged bishops in Catholic lands. Facing a critical shortage of priests, the Mission established two seminaries, the *Collegium Alticollense* in Cologne (1602) and the *Collegium Pulcherimae Mariae Virginis* (1617) to train clergy for the United Provinces.<sup>9</sup> By the early seventeenth century, these seminaries began to turn out 15 to 30 priests per year so that by 1616 the number of secular priests had grown to 219 and to 360 by 1642.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, *Alticollense* and *Pulcherima* ranked among the earliest and most enduring seminaries founded after the Council of Trent. As early as 1616, an apostolic vicar claimed that all but a few of the Dutch clergy held baccalaureates or licentiates in theology.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond the secular priests, the growing presence of religious orders, especially the Society of Jesus, made an important contribution to the revival of Catholicism. In 1592, Sasbout Vosmeer, the first apostolic vicar, appealed to Rome for assistance in meeting the shortage of priests and Pope Clement VIII responded by requesting service from the Jesuits. Shortly thereafter, four Jesuits began their missionary vocation in the United Provinces. The numbers of Jesuits,

---

<sup>9</sup> Reussens E., *Documents relatifs à l'histoire de l'université de Louvain (1425-1745)*, vol. 3, *Collèges et pédagogues* (Louvain: 1881-1885) 450; Smit F. – Jacobs J., *Van den Hogenhewel gekomen: bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de priesteropleiding in de kerk van Utrecht, 1683-1723* (Nijmegen: 1994) 10, 39.

<sup>10</sup> Hamans P., *Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* (Bruges: 1992) 258; Smit F. – Jacobs J., *Van den Hogenhewel gekomen* (noot 9) 34, 38.

<sup>11</sup> Lommel SJ, A. van (ed.), "Brevis descriptio status in quo est ecclesia catholica", *Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht* 1 (1874-75) 208-26, esp. 209; Comerford K., *Ordaining the Catholic Reformation: priests and seminary pedagogy in Fiesole 1575-1675* (Florence: 2001) xiii-xxi, 13-27.

as well as Franciscans, Dominicans, and other orders increased incrementally but significantly during the century. By the 1650s, 142 out of the 442 priests in this mission territory belonged to a religious order, 62 of whom were Jesuit.<sup>12</sup>

The regular priests played a valuable role in church growth, though their presence introduced intractable jurisdictional, pastoral, and theological quarrels that split the clergy in the early eighteenth century. Vosmeer and his successors viewed the Holland Mission as the continuation of the Utrecht archdiocese and the vicariate as the continuation of the archbishop's office. According to this diocesan vision of the Mission, all religious should submit themselves to the authority of the ordinary and work under his direction. Religious orders, however, considered these heretical lands a mission field, not a church province governed by an archbishop, and consequently regular priests only recognized the authority of their superiors and the pope. In addition to the jurisdictional conflict, the secular priests took a much more rigorist approach to confession and penance than the Jesuits, producing discord and disunity among laity and clergy. Finally in the second half of the century, a significant number of the secular clergy embraced Jansenist theological views that left them vulnerable to Jesuit charges of heresy, and led to the removal of an apostolic vicar in 1702 and schism in 1723.<sup>13</sup>

Despite these conflicts, the pastoral work of regular and secular priests brought about dramatic growth among Dutch Catholics. The numbers of Catholics rose from the nadir of the late sixteenth century to comprise approximately half of the population of the United Provinces and almost 30% of the area served by the Holland Mission. Greater public acceptance of the Reformed Church, combined with the intractable clerical disputes, led to a decline in the second half of the 1600s. By the early eighteenth century, Catholics made up one-third of the population and only 15% within Mission territory.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Hamans P., *Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk* (note 10) 258–61.

<sup>13</sup> Rogier L., *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme* (note 8) 2, 53–64, 287–339.

<sup>14</sup> Kok J. de, *Nederland op de breuklijn Rome-Reformatie: numerieke aspecten van protestantisering en Katholieke herleving in de noordelijke Nederlanden, 1580–1880* (Assen: 1964) 246–48. The discrepancy in these percentages was due to the large number of Catholics in the States Brabant, which were part of the 'Generality Lands' under the authority of bishops in the Southern Netherlands and outside of the Mission's jurisdiction. Israel J., *The Dutch Republic: its rise, greatness, and fall 1477–1806* (Oxford: 1995) 387–89.

During a period of irrepressible growth and irreparable conflict, lay men and women interacted closely and intensely with priests, both secular and regular. Hostile political conditions and a shortage of priests inculcated a strong appreciation for solid sacerdotal leadership. These circumstances fostered a lay leadership that sought a vigorous clerical presence yet expected the clergy to serve local needs as local people understood them. Correspondences between lay leaders and clergy in the archives of the apostolic vicars in Utrecht reveal the complex attitudes of the laity towards the clergy. These perspectives on the clergy, in turn, can suggest to us the ways in which Dutch lay folk appropriated Catholicism in the post-Tridentine era.

In a variety of contexts, community leaders wrote expressing their desire for capable preachers, caring pastors, and faithful shepherds so that local Catholics might become more devout in their faith. The priest's function in pastoral ministry actually formed the most prominent theme in the dispatches between lay organizers and church authorities. Representatives from local congregations wrote periodically requesting a priest, expressing appreciation or support for their priest, complaining about their priest, protesting the removal of their priest, or decrying the arrival of a new priest. This correspondence indicates that laity did not seek priests simply to administer the necessary rites, but lay leaders sought pastors for spiritual guidance and held pastoral standards for the clergy.

Requests for priests occurred throughout this entire period, though they appeared with increasing frequency in the second half of the seventeenth century. The growing number of requests likely resulted from more careful attention to preserving correspondence, but also reflected the improved political conditions, the stronger church organization, and an established record of pastoral care in the later 1600s. The language of the requests themselves evoked the values of Tridentine spirituality, revealing an abiding concern for the quality of pastoral care. Catholics in Lingen, for example, asked Vosmeer in 1607 to send them Adam Vos because he would help them to grow and keep alive the fervor of 'spiritual children.'<sup>15</sup> Likewise, Gerardt Coopmans appealed for a priest who would help him live faithfully during times of personal trouble.<sup>16</sup> Later in the century, curators from Culemborg

---

<sup>15</sup> OBC. 8, Dronrijp to Vosmeer, May 14, 1607.

<sup>16</sup> OBC. 4, Coopmans to Vosmeer, March 4, 1599.

wrote the apostolic vicar, Johannes van Neercassel, expressing appreciation for Adrianus Hermens because he was 'not only worthy and acceptable' but he also demonstrated 'good affection and fatherly care' for them.<sup>17</sup>

The laity regularly expressed gratitude to church authorities for assigning them a priest, just as a genuine congeniality typified initial contacts between congregations and new clergy. A 1605 letter thanked Albert Eggius, dean of the Haarlem cathedral chapter, for 'the prosperity you have shown us poor sinners in recommending to us the honorable Mr. Hendrik van Satfaen to be the shepherd of our souls.'<sup>18</sup> Winine Pieters expressed appreciation in 1614 for a priest who 'brings them great profit in God's grace.'<sup>19</sup> The 'entire community' in Deventer thanked Neercassel for a Fr. Metelen and held out hope that this new pastor would heal divisions in the congregation.<sup>20</sup>

The laity wanted a priest to do much more than perform sacred rites, as leaders petitioned for clergy who could carry out pastoral duties faithfully and preach the word of God. The Harlingen community asked for a new priest in 1682 because its current one refused to visit the sick, failed to encourage charity, and offered 'little direction in the Catholic religion for mindful people.'<sup>21</sup> The curators of Leiden, remonstrated to the apostolic vicar in 1689 that their priests lacked the competence and erudition of their predecessors, since the current crop 'are not very industrious in their studies and in their sermons. They go up to the pulpit with little study and they barely discuss or read the scriptures [. . .] to hear them brings great shame [. . .]'.<sup>22</sup> It was not the preaching competence of Ignatius Walvis, a Jansenist, that grated on lay leaders in Gouda, but it was the strident tone he took in his sermons against the religious orders. According to a complaint in January 1697, forty people had witnessed Walvis ridicule Franciscans and Jesuits from the pulpit. Objecting to this slander, the laity charged Walvis with creating division and uproar.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> OBC. 225, Beeck to Neercassel, August 11 [or 21], 1671.

<sup>18</sup> RNH. 354, Machario to Eggius, March 7, 1605.

<sup>19</sup> OBC. 14, Pieters to Vosmeer, February 19, 1614.

<sup>20</sup> OBC. 230, Deventer to Neercassel, August 18, 1682.

<sup>21</sup> OBC. 230, Harlingen to Neercassel, August 12, 1682.

<sup>22</sup> OBC. 337, Leiden to Codde, May 30, 1689.

<sup>23</sup> OBC. 348, Gouda to Codde, [January 1697]. Similar cases include OBC. 19, Vosmeer to Schagen, February 20, 1612; 225, Barre/Amsterdam to Neercassel [1671]; 249, Neercassel to Groningen, February 9, 1680; 252, Neercassel to Mensinck/Deventer, March 22, May 19, September 3, September 16, 1682.

Those priests who established a record for faithful and diligent service within the local community gained the laity's deep affection and loyalty, bonds that were not easily broken. Lay women and men cherished the pastoral image of the good shepherd who cared for his flock, leading them in the path of salvation. Neercassel reassured the curators of Groningen, commending them for the love they felt for their priest and consoling them at his death.<sup>24</sup> When priests filled the role of the good pastor, the laity supported them and rushed to their defense when accused by fellow clerics or superiors. The Leiden congregation remonstrated with Vosmeer in 1607 for removing their priest, Alexander van Lamzweerde, who violated Tridentine marriage canons when presiding over the marriage of his nephew (an erstwhile Franciscan). The Leiden curators argued that, regardless of the charges against him, the community 'is very inclined toward him with much affection because of the fruit he has brought forth in us.'<sup>25</sup> Amersfoort Catholics wrote supporting their priest, accused of incompetence by 'those of the Catholic religion outside our community.' The local leaders testified that he had served them ably by preaching and educating the young.<sup>26</sup>

The secular priests, and a number of the religious, who worked in the Holland Mission were native Catholics. These young men grew up in Catholic communities linked together by family and friendship associations, a circumstance that brought priests and lay people together into personal networks. Over time, as Catholics married in the faith with greater frequency, as elite families made connections with the church hierarchy in the United Provinces, and as priests went to serve in different areas, personal networks solidified around a distinct religious identity.

Hints at the deep-seated affective relations among clergy and laity emerged in the correspondence, as individuals passed on news about their principal life events of their family and friends. Neercassel rejoiced in the birth of his godson to his nephew and expressed pleasure that the boy was named after him.<sup>27</sup> Two years later, Neercassel

---

<sup>24</sup> OBC. 252, Neercassel to Oosterweer/Groningen, January 25, 1682.

<sup>25</sup> OBC. 8, Leiden to Vosmeer, June 8, 1607. See Kooi (1995).

<sup>26</sup> OBC. 338, Amersfoort to Codde, June 29, 1690. Other examples, see OBC. 230, Groningen to Neercassel, September 14, 1682; 231, Groningen to Neercassel, June 6, 1683; 229, Schagen to Neercassel, [1680]; 230, Zwolle to Neercassel, March 3, 1682; 337, Deventer to Codde, December 27, 1688.

<sup>27</sup> OBC. 247, Neercassel to Putten, September 4, 1675.

rejoiced in the wedding of another nephew, hoping that it 'would bear much fruit and help lead him to salvation.'<sup>28</sup> Death occasioned a good deal of writing and comforting. Four days after the death of a relative, A.A. and Claertgen Willems informed Vosmeer of the event and expressed their desire to see him.<sup>29</sup> Several years later, Gerardt Coopmans described to Vosmeer the sorrow he and his wife felt for their friend and deceased priest, Wouter Dirxzsoon, writing that God had repaid them 'a thousand times' for the little help they had provided Dirxzsoon. Coopmans also asked Vosmeer to pray for their son to repent of heresy and to send them devotional material.<sup>30</sup> Later in the century, Anna van den Bossche thanked Neercassel for all the comfort he gave her as her brother recently passed away. He conveyed his fondness for Neercassel by bequeathing him a gold timepiece.<sup>31</sup>

The intermingling of family connections and friends revealed itself in other ways. Tilman Vosmeer, brother of and secretary to Sasbout Vosmeer, carried on a regular correspondence with his nephew, Pieter van der Dussen, in Delft at least from July 1625 to October 1628 and from February 1632 to January 1634. The specific purpose of the exchange was to discuss financial transactions from an endowment the Vosmeer family had bequeathed for Catholic poor relief. Personal innuendo and the affairs of relatives actually occupied most of the letters. From Delft, the faithful and cheerful nephew sent greetings from his wife and family and described the activities of numerous family members and friends. Van der Dussen reported on a relative who visited a prostitute (to the scandal of everyone) and described the tragic perambulations of Cristaen, a cousin, who suffered from mental dysfunctions.<sup>32</sup> In most cases, correspondents referred to personal matters obliquely; nevertheless, brief snippets here and there give a glimpse into the networks of friendships and family that underlay Dutch Catholic experience.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> OBC. 248, Neercassel to Van Andel, June 23, 1677.

<sup>29</sup> OBC. 9, Willems to Vosmeer, May 12, 1608.

<sup>30</sup> OBC. 4, Coopmans to Vosmeer, March 4, 1599.

<sup>31</sup> OBC. 229, Bossche to Neercassel, May 30, June 26, 1679. Other examples, OBC. 248, Neercassel to Stalpart, October 28, 1678.

<sup>32</sup> For references, see Bruggeman J. – Kortlever Y. (2001), *Inventaris van de archieven van de apostolische vicarissen van de Hollandse Zending en hun secretarissen 1579–1729* (Utrecht: 2001) 367.

<sup>33</sup> Other examples, OBC. 8, Kettler to Vosmeer, November 12, 1607; 226, 227,

Because of the strong personal and religious connections between a priest and the local community, the reassignment or departure of a venerable pastor was a bitter pill. Given the chronic shortage of priests, the departure of a priest in rural areas could also mean a disruption in pastoral care. This anxiety, coupled with the emotional ties between an esteemed pastor and his congregation often led communities to challenge the removal. Affection for a local priest, then, could undermine loyalty to the broader Catholic body, governed by the apostolic vicar. The apostolic vicar, Jacob de la Torre instigated the removal of a Jesuit from Bodegraven, but this action upset the congregation. Lamenting the division, De la Torre upbraided them for their partisanship and admonished them to obedience.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, the Zwolle community protested the reassignment of their pastor, Fr. Dobbius and sixteen people signed a petition to have him returned.<sup>35</sup> In addition to the anxiety in losing a good priest, congregations often felt slighted when their favorite priest went to another area. Fifty Catholics in Schagen signed a letter to Vosmeer in 1611 that protested his reassignment of their priest, Joost Cathden, to Hoorn. They felt insulted that the Mission showed favor to a smaller number of Catholics in Hoorn to the disadvantage of their larger number.<sup>36</sup> Filled with uproar, the community at Westerblocker (province of Holland) professed astonishment that Neercassel would turn down 170 people, who would no longer have a pastor.<sup>37</sup>

The Dutch laity, therefore, felt a keen attachment to the clergy and placed a high value on capable pastors who they believed would lead them to salvation. Lay commitment to a robust clericalism did not mean, however, that men and women always took clerical instruction quietly. On the contrary, lay people asserted their prerogatives, expressed their views, and held the clergy accountable to church

---

Hooft to Johannes van Neercassel, August 9, 13, 20, 30, September 6, 24, 1674, March 31, 1676, March 6, 1678; 226, Hop to Neercassel, August 11, 20, 1674; 226, Ornia to Neercassel, August 7, 1672; 250, Neercassel to Burmania, September 22, 1680.

<sup>34</sup> OBC. 189, Torre to Bodegraven, January 8, 1649.

<sup>35</sup> OBC. 230, Zwolle to Neercassel, July 24, 1682.

<sup>36</sup> OBC. 12, Schagen to Vosmeer, April 30, 1611.

<sup>37</sup> OBC. 223, Westerblocker to Neercassel, August 18, 1668. Similar responses, OBC. 223, Heerenveen to Neercassel, February 27, 1667; 336, Culemborg to Codde, October 26, 1687; 229, Vlissingen to Neercassel, March 30, 1679; 232, Brakel to Neercassel, February 23, 1686; 245, Neercassel to Temminck, October 30, 1671; 247, Neercassel to Oldenzaal, October 27, 1675.

standards. After the Dutch government took possession of all ecclesiastical benefices, priests were supported largely through the contributions, gifts, and collections taken from local congregations with elites assuming a substantial burden of the financial support. In addition, lay elites often played a large role in protecting congregations by providing recognition payments to the local bailiff or sheriff.

Corresponding to their financial commitment, lay elites exerted influence in defending the interests of local Catholics in procuring and retaining an acceptable priest. For example, at the death of their priest, lay leaders from Amersfoort declared in 1674 their preference for a Recollect father, since they had 'comforted us and stood by us in difficult times.' When the apostolic vicar sent them a secular priest instead, the Amersfoort leadership 'protest[ed] before God and the world [. . .] that his excellency [the apostolic vicar] should have spoken to or written us to get our opinion before changing pastors and taking the fathers from here.'<sup>38</sup> Complaining to Neercassel about a switch in their priests, Catholics in Schagen made a similar assertion, proclaiming that a change could not take place without 'our voluntary permission, which was clearly known by the elders [of the community].'<sup>39</sup> Likewise, lay leaders in Zutphen petitioned for a replacement for their priest (Fr. Verhaelen) because the only other resident priest was a Jesuit who the curators feared was too busy directing a school to serve their pastoral needs. They requested a 'truly good and capable pastor' that would also meet the approval of the local authority.<sup>40</sup>

Lay communities, thus, possessed their own ideas about the qualities needed in a priest and they demanded the church hierarchy take note of them. In one small rural district, church members voted on whether or not to recommend the appointment of a priest. In early 1699, 602 Catholics in Langeraar and Korteraar (province of Holland), both men and women listed by name or family, recommended to the apostolic vicar the appointment of Nicholas Reder, who had served them previously as a chaplain, as their pastor.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine the extent to which (if any) other Catholic communities took such collective action, though other letters indicate that a broad spectrum of the community partici-

---

<sup>38</sup> OBC. 226, Amersfoort to Neercassel, February 27, 1674.

<sup>39</sup> OBC. 229, Schagen to Neercassel [1680].

<sup>40</sup> OBC. 226, Zutphen to Neercassel, September 4, 1673.

<sup>41</sup> OBC. 343, Langeraar, Korteraar to Codde [February 1699].

pated in these decisions. For example, a number of letters begin 'we the undersigned, representing the Catholic community,' or 'on behalf of the Catholic community.'<sup>42</sup> Even though elites customarily acted on behalf of corporate bodies without necessarily consulting its members, the clandestine character of Catholicism would have necessarily compelled members of a congregation to cooperate together and in some proximity to one another. It is clear that the lay leadership took an active role in seeking capable pastors for their communities.<sup>43</sup>

Church authorities in the United Provinces could ill afford to ignore the voice of the laity when it came to placing priests. On a number of occasions, the apostolic vicars in the second half of the century revealed that a community's petition influenced them to make a certain decision. Neercassel sought to 'avoid schism' and 'promote unity' among the laity in Deventer by allowing a religious, Fr. van Someren, to serve them. His compromise had limits, however. For Neercassel specified that Van Someren could only serve until Easter and then the laity must accept a secular priest.<sup>44</sup> The 'powerful request' from Vlissingen spurred Neercassel to send them Amandus van Nispen in July 1678. Likewise, in response to another 'powerful request' ('kragtig versoeck') in Polsbroek, Neercassel granted them their choice, Fr. Straffinvelt. And because congregations in Hoogwoud and Opmeer joined together in 'Christian unity' to seek a pastor, Codde agreed to place Arnoldus Wier among them.<sup>45</sup> Though apostolic vicars and other Dutch church authorities sometimes took actions that were at odds with local wishes, ecclesiastical leaders attempted to find areas of common ground. Since local contentment depended upon a compatible match between priest and lay community, it only made good sense for apostolic vicars to extend as much latitude as possible to local leaders in the placement of priests.

---

<sup>42</sup> Examples, OBC. 223, Jisp to Neercassel, May 14, 1667; 229, Randenburg (Raamburg) to Neercassel, February 5, 1680; 230, Deventer to Neercassel, August 18, 1682.

<sup>43</sup> Examples, OBC. 11, Dircxsoon (Groenhout) to Vosmeer, February 20, 1610; 223, Jisp to Neercassel, May 14, 1667; 229, Randenburg (Raamburg) to Neercassel, February 5, 1680; 230, Deventer to Neercassel, August 14, 1682; 252, Neercassel to Oosterweer/Groningen, January 25, 1682; 230, Harlingen to Neercassel, August 12, 1682; 230, Middelburg to Neercassel, September 5, 1682; 338, Kampen to Codde, September 16, 1690; 362, Codde to Goes, October 28, 1699.

<sup>44</sup> OBC. 246, Neercassel to Deventer, March 29, 1675.

<sup>45</sup> OBC. 248, Neercassel to Vlissingen, July 9, 1678; 250, Neercassel to Polsbroek, October 30, 1680; 362, Codde to Hoogwoud/Opmeer, July 9, 1700.

Though Dutch Catholic men and women generally held clergy in high esteem, their loyalty and affection were not unconditional. In fact, the laity held definite attitudes about the moral character and pastoral ability of clergy. If clergy did not meet these expectations, lay folk displayed no reticence in sharing their dissatisfaction with the ecclesiastical hierarchy. C. Dirckxsoon, requesting a priest for Rotterdam, mentioned that Catholics in the area would continue to hold little affection for Alexander Lamzweerde (dismissed from Leiden), for they wished to have a priest 'of greater learning and a better life.'<sup>46</sup> Louis van der Putten, found it offensive that two priests in Dordrecht, Fr. Hallincq and Fr. van Gestel, expressed joy at the death of another priest, Fr. Verrijn. For this offense, Van der Putten declared that the lay leaders had determined that Hallincq should no longer celebrate Mass there, because they regarded his presence at the altar as sacrilege. Further, they suspected Hallincq of gambling, feared the worst between him and his housekeeper, and heard the lies he spread about other priests. Because of these offenses, they claimed that no one has gone to confession for six months.<sup>47</sup>

The laity did not hold rigid puritanical expectations about priestly conduct, rather they concerned themselves largely with the pastoral competence of the clergy. The moral comportment of the clergy came into play when lay men and women feared it would undermine pastoral effective ministry. Catholics in Schagen, for example, voiced their disapproval in 1680 that Neercassel was sending a Fr. Akerboom back to their district. During a previous tenure there, Fr. Akerboom had outraged the congregation by failing to conduct services, acting dishonorably with a maidservant, and going about drunk in public. A number reported seeing him on more than one occasion so inebriated that he could not stay on a horse; on one evening, while riding to a church warden's house, he fell out of a wagon in a drunken state. Consequently, no one wanted to confess to him and the leaders 'prayed that god almighty will endow his excellency [Neercassel] with understanding to make other arrangements for them to the greater praise, honor, and glory of God and to the salvation of their souls.'<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> OBC. 11, Dirckxsoon (Groenhout) to Vosmeer, February 20, 1610.

<sup>47</sup> OBC. 337, Putten to Codde, December 12, 1689.

<sup>48</sup> OBC. 229, Schagen to Neercassel [1680]. See also, OBC. 229, Purmerland to Neercassel, August 23, 1680.

Secular and regular clergy routinely traded recriminations about sexual impropriety, especially with *kloppen* (unmarried or widowed Catholic women devoted to church work). But I have encountered only a very few instances in which the lay men or women accused a priest of sexual impropriety. Two *kloppen* in Leiden protested the appointment of Fr. Verschuren to Leiden in 1685 because of his reputation for sexual aggression toward the women. They cited instances in which he touched a maiden inappropriately and that neighbors in the vicinity of his residence had rumored that he ran a brothel since many young women went in and out at night.<sup>49</sup> A number of priests around Utrecht took umbrage and complained to Sasbout Vosmeer that Jesuits were spreading malicious tales that seculars were attempting to control the *kloppen* and have sexual encounters with them.<sup>50</sup> But most of the complaints from the laity had little to do with illicit sexuality among the clergy, but concerned issues of pastoral responsibility, such as visiting the sick, preaching the word of God, and promoting charity for the poor.

While lay Catholics valued pastoral leadership, they did not readily accept overbearing treatment from the clergy. From a priest's point of view, the reluctance to obey specific clerical demands sometimes bore a close resemblance to simple defiance. A typical response was the one Vosmeer made about a dispute in Leiden, charging common folk with rebellion because they refused to submit to discipline.<sup>51</sup> Yet lay people expected their priests to accord them a certain level of respect and the clergy could not take their obedience for granted. The apostolic vicar, Philip Rovenius, became upset with a number of Catholics in Enkhuizen in the mid-1630s for their participation in a bitter dispute between a Jesuit, Theodore de Jonge, and the secular priest, August de Wolff. Rovenius accused the Jesuits of inflaming common folk, causing internal division, and bringing on political retribution. The lay curators, however, returned fire. They criticized Rovenius' excessive control over priestly service and they called into question the requirement that lay congregations had to obtain special permission to call a Jesuit. 'Are we then outcasts and bastards of the Holy Church,' they asked. Finally, they echoed

---

<sup>49</sup> OBC. 232, Velsen/Claes to Neercassel, October 16 [1685]. See also, OBC. 223, Eijckel to Neercassel, June 13, 1667.

<sup>50</sup> OBC. 10, Utrecht to Vosmeer, April 9, 1609.

<sup>51</sup> OBC. 19, Vosmeer to Jacobus, May 14, 1611.

the Jesuit argument that the apostolic vicar in Utrecht held on so tightly to the reins of pastoral authority that they compromised pastoral ministry and neglected the needs of lay Catholics.<sup>52</sup>

It often became necessary for apostolic vicars, then, to mollify local lay Catholics. Neercassel, for instance, had to assure leaders in Leeuwarden in 1685 that in the future their priest would comport himself in humility and he further guaranteed that his priests would not behave as rulers.<sup>53</sup> On other occasions, Neercassel coaxed lay Catholics into cooperating with priests who had upset them. In 1680, he mediated a dispute between lay members and Fr. Tinga in Groningen over unspecified claims that the priest was not quite competent and should be relieved of his office. Reminding lay leaders that Fr. Tinga had served as a priest for forty years, the apostolic vicar pleaded with them not to cast off the old priest and urged them to make peace with him.<sup>54</sup>

While Catholic communities regularly used the apostolic vicar as their court of appeal against their own priest, a number of congregations found themselves at odds with the secular hierarchy. These disputes usually percolated up from local conflicts between laity and clergy and involved a standoff over clerical authority. In these cases, the apostolic vicars did not demonstrate the same degree of conciliation as they did when the disputes were only local ones. They took a hard line on rebellion against their authority, though the laity stood its ground as well. In a conflict with the laity of Hoorn, Vosmeer labeled the protagonists as 'disobedient children,' admonished the congregation to accept the clergy's judgement or the community would face punishment.<sup>55</sup> Lay leaders responded vigorously, just as the Schagen community berated Vosmeer for leaving them without a priest, grumbling 'there is no love for us' since other communities receive greater attention.<sup>56</sup> While Schagen leaders laced their plea with guilt, the laity in a village south of Amsterdam responded angrily. The church wardens in Buitenveldert accused Neercassel of

---

<sup>52</sup> OBC. 89, Enkhuizen to Rovenius, February 28, 1637.

<sup>53</sup> OBC. 254, Neercassel to Leeuwarden, September 18, 1685.

<sup>54</sup> OBC. 249, Neercassel to Groningen, February 9, 1680.

<sup>55</sup> OBC. 20, Vosmeer to Hoorn, April 22, 1613.

<sup>56</sup> OBC. 12, Schagen to Vosmeer, April 30, 1611.

‘making us out to be shameless as if we did not serve with Lord Adrianus Achtienhoven [an Augustinian].’<sup>57</sup>

The correspondence between local leaders and ecclesiastical authorities point to a tenacious feeling of prerogative, in conjunction with a sincere allegiance to Tridentine clericalism, that formed the outlines of lay Catholic identity in the seventeenth-century Netherlands. Elsewhere I have argued that members of the Dutch Reformed Church possessed their own independent sense of moral honor, which often frustrated consistories’ attempts to instill obedience to church officers.<sup>58</sup> Men and women associated with the Reformed Church were eager to take communion and participate in the life of the community, yet became indignant when their character was called into question in disciplinary proceedings. The conflicting impulses of commitment to a religious community and assertion of moral independence present among the Calvinist rank and file seems also at work in the Catholic laity. Only systematic comparative research into the activities and attitudes of laity across confessional groups can provide a full analysis of lay agency in the religious culture of the Dutch Republic. This present study, though quite preliminary, suggests that the development of religious piety in the seventeenth century was a negotiated process between laity and clergy. Even without state support, Tridentine Catholicism took root among the Dutch laity and local lay leaders welcomed the Holland Mission’s program of clerical reform. In a full variety of ways, therefore, lay people engaged the Catholic clergy. Perhaps that they did so largely within the framework of the institutional church was because they always had the option to leave.

---

<sup>57</sup> OBC. 226, Buitenveldert to Neercassel, January 17, 1674.

<sup>58</sup> Parker C., *The reformation of community: social welfare and Calvinist charity in Holland, 1572–1620* (Cambridge, UK: 1998) 132–33.

*Selective Bibliography*1. *Primary sources*1.1. *Archival Sources*

Het Utrechts Archief. Archieven van de Apostolische Vicarissen van de Hollandse Zending, 1579–1728. See Bruggeman J. – Kortlever Y. (2001), *Inventaris van de archieven van de apostolische vicarissen van de Hollandse Zending en hun secretarissen 1579–1729* (Utrecht: 2001) (cited as OBC, according to inventory number, correspondents, and date).

Rijksarchief van Noord-Holland te Haarlem. Archieven van het Bisdome Haarlem van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk, 1559–1853. Archief van het Kapittel. See Persman J., *Archieven van het Bisdome Haarlem van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk* (Haarlem: 1985) (cited as RNH, according to inventory number, correspondents, and date).

1.2. *Published Sources*

*Groot Placcaet-Boek, inhoudende de placaten ende ordonnantien van de Hoogh-Mog. Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden ende vande Ed. Groot Mog. Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslant, mitsgaders van Ed. Mog. Heeren Staten van Zeelandt*, 9 vols. ('s-Gravenhage: 1658–1770).

*Nederlandsch Placcaet-Boeck: Waerinne alle voornaemste placaten, ordonnatien, accorden ende andere acten ende monumenten, uijt-ghgeven bij EE Hoog-Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenigde Nederlantsche Provintien*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: 1644).

LOMMELE SJ, A. VAN (ed.), “Brevis descriptio status in quo est ecclesia catholica”, *Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht* 1 (1874–75) 208–26.

2. *Secondary sources*

BARNES A., “The social transformation of the French parish clergy, 1500–1800”, in *Culture and identity in early modern Europe (1500–1800)*, ed. B. Diefendorf – C. Hesse (Ann Arbor: 1993) 139–58.

BOER W. DE, *Conquest of the soul: confession, discipline, and public order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Boston: 2001).

BURKE P., *Popular culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: 1978).

CHRISTIAN W., *Local religion in sixteenth-century Spain* (Princeton: 1981).

COMERFORD K., *Ordaining the Catholic Reformation: priests and seminary pedagogy in Fiesole 1575–1675* (Florence: 2001).

DELUMEAU J., *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire: a new view of the Counter-Reformation* (Philadelphia: 1977).

FARR J., “The pure and disciplined body: hierarchy, morality, and symbolism in France during the Catholic Reformation”, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 21(1991) 391–414.

FORSTER M., *Catholic revival in the age of the Baroque: religious identity in southwest Germany, 1550–1750* (Cambridge, UK: 2001).

HAMANS P., *Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* (Bruges: 1992).

HOFFMAN P., *Church and community in the diocese of Lyon, 1500–1789* (New Haven: 1984).

HSIA R. PO-CHIA, *Society and religion in Münster, 1535–1618* (New Haven: 1984).

—, *Social discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe, 1550–1750* (London: 1989).

—, *The world of Catholic renewal, 1540–1770* (New York: 1998).

— – NIEROP H. VAN (eds.), *Calvinism and religious toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, UK: 2002).

ISRAEL J., *The Dutch Republic: its rise, greatness, and fall 1477–1806* (Oxford: 1995).

- KAPLAN B., "Fictions of privacy: house chapels and the spatial accommodation of religious dissent in Early Modern Europe", *American Historical Review* 107(2002) 1031–42.
- KOK J. DE, *Nederland op de breuklijn Rome-Reformatie: numerieke aspecten van protestantisering en Katholieke herleving in de noordelijke Nederlanden, 1580–1880* (Assen: 1964).
- KOOI C., "Popish impudence: the perseverance of the Roman Catholic faithful in Calvinist Holland, 1572–1620", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 26(1995) 75–85.
- MUCHEMBLED R., *Popular culture and elite culture in France 1400–1750*, trans. L. Cochrane (Baton Rouge: 1985).
- MULLETT M., *The Catholic reformation* (New York: 1999).
- OESTREICH G., *Neostoicism and the early modern state*, ed. Br. Oestreich – H.G. Koenigsburger, trans. D. McLintock (Cambridge: 1982).
- PARKER C., *The reformation of community: social welfare and Calvinist charity in Holland, 1572–1620* (Cambridge, UK: 1998).
- POSKA A., *Regulating the people: the Catholic Reformation in seventeenth-century Spain* (Boston: 1998).
- POST R., *Kerkelijke Verhouding in Nederland vóór de Reformatie van 1500 tot 1580* (Utrecht: 1954).
- REINHARD W., "Reformation, Counter-Reformation and the Early Modern state: a reassessment", *Catholic Historical Review* 75(1989) 383–404.
- REUSSENS E., *Documents relatifs à l'histoire de l'université de Louvain (1425–1745)*, vol. 3, *Collèges et pédagogues* (Louvain: 1881–1885).
- ROGIER L., *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 3 vols (Amsterdam: 1947).
- SCHILLING H., "Confessional Europe", in *Handbook of European history, 1400–1600. Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation*, 2 vols., ed. Th.A. Brady Jr. – H.A. Oberman – J.D. Tracy (Grand Rapids: 1996), vol. 2, *Visions, programs, outcomes* 641–82.
- SMIT F. – JACOBS J., *Van den Hogenheuvel gekomen: bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de priesteropleiding in de kerk van Utrecht, 1683–1723* (Nijmegen: 1994).

*This page intentionally left blank*

REMARKABLE PROVIDENCES.  
THE DUTCH RECEPTION OF AN ENGLISH  
COLLECTION OF PROTESTANT WONDER STORIES\*

Fred van Lieburg

Some years ago the Study Centre for Protestant Book Culture at the *Vrije Universiteit* in Amsterdam organised the publication of a catalogue containing a rather sizeable collection of old English books, which were held in its library.<sup>1</sup> Since the arrangement of this collection was greatly determined by the University's confessional character, it consisted for a substantial part of Protestant literature. Religious trends, especially Puritanism, have evidently played an important role in the cultural transactions between the Netherlands and English speaking countries during the early-modern period. This 'intertraffic of the mind' is evident from the numerous Dutch translations of English devotional works which appeared throughout the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Although the Low Countries were indeed a crossroads of influences from Germany and France, the overseas influence was unmistakably predominant from a religious-historical viewpoint.<sup>2</sup>

---

\* This article was translated by Dr. Annemie Godbehere. It is a summary of the First Mr. H. Bos-lecture, organised by the Studiecentrum voor Protestantse Boekcultuur of the *Vrije Universiteit* in Amsterdam on 25 May 2000. See for an extended version in Dutch: Lieburg F. van, *Merkwaardige voorzienigheden. Wonderverhalen in de geschiedenis van het protestantisme* (Zoetermeer: 2001). I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Willem Heijting for supporting my research and the publication of this study.

<sup>1</sup> Cat M.L.H.M. le, *Protestantism crossing the seas. A short-title catalogue of English books printed before 1801 illustrating the spread of Protestant thought and the exchange of ideas between the English-speaking countries and the Netherlands held by the University Library of the Vrije Universiteit at Amsterdam* ('t Goy-Houten: 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Schoneveld C.W., *Intertraffic of the mind studies in seventeenth-century Anglo-Dutch translation with a checklist of books translated from English into Dutch, 1600–1700* (Leiden: 1983); Alblas J.B.H., *Johannes Boekholt (1656–1693). The first Dutch publisher of John Bunyan and other English authors* (Nieuwkoop: 1987); Hof W.J. op 't, "Piety in the wake of trade. The North Sea as an intermediary of reformed piety up to 1700", in *The North Sea and culture (1550–1800)*, ed. J. Roding – L. Heerma van Voss (Hilversum: 1996) 248–265.

The catalogue in question drew my attention to a seventeenth century English writer named William Turner (1653–1701), the author of two books; the only two copies in the Netherlands are held at the *Vrije Universiteit*'s library. One of these is a folio of more than a thousand pages and carries the intriguing title *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences, both of judgment and mercy, which have happened in this present age*<sup>3</sup> [Fig. 10]. Amongst the VU-collection, this work, dated 1697, is decidedly unique in its class. Yet, it belongs to a specific genre, to which attention was given for the first time in 1971 by the historian Keith Thomas in his classical work about popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England. We refer here to a genre of British accounts of 'remarkable providences'. Historical research of the last decades has shown that some of these accounts seemed to have been a fascinating source for our knowledge of religious mentalities and supernatural world views, but other collections, such as the voluminous work of Turner, had hardly received any attention.<sup>4</sup>

In this article I would like to contribute to the research in this field from the perspective of British-Dutch contacts of the early-modern period. Turner's book, clearly the only offshoot of the above mentioned branch of 'remarkable providences', was translated into Dutch, albeit partly, and published in 1737 and again printed twice in the late eighteenth century. As far as I know it is the only English work in this class which was actually published in another language, and so is available to shed more light on the special role of the Low Countries as a crossroads of religious belief. By dealing with the background, contents and reception of the Dutch Turner translation,

<sup>3</sup> Turner W., *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences, both of judgement and mercy, which have hapnd in this age* (London: 1697). Cf. Le Cat, *Protestantism crossing the seas* (note 1) no. T 200; Wing D., *Short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America and of English books printed in other countries 1641–1700* (New York: 1982–1998<sup>2</sup>) no. T 3345; Parks S., *John Dunton and the English book trade. A study of his career with a checklist of his publications* (New York/London: 1976) 322–323. See for Turner's other work (*The history of all religions in the world*, London: 1695) Wing no. T 3347; Parks 309; Le Cat no T 201.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas K., *Religion and the decline of magic. Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (London: 1971) 96; Rumsey P.L., *Acts of God and the People, 1620–1730* (Ann Arbor: 1986); Hall D.D., *World of wonders, days of judgement. Popular religious belief in early New England* (New York: 1989); Greyerz K. von, *Vorsehungsglaube und Kosmologie. Studien zu englischen Selbstzeugnissen des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen/Zürich: 1990) 88–89; Bergamasco L. "Hagiographie et sainteté en Angleterre aux XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles", in: *Annales ESC* 48 (1993) 1064–1065; Walsham A., *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: 1999).

I hope to unveil the international traditions of religious communication, and the variable importance these 'stories of miracles' could have in religious, intellectual and cultural contexts.

*Remarkable providences*

Matthew Poole, rector of Syon College in London and a Puritan theologian, initiated a special project around 1657. He wanted to record a variety of 'activities of the Lord' as these were still daily concretely and visibly revealed in order to publish them later. He himself was not able to reach his goal despite working on it for years on end.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless he established the framework for some collections of stories of miracles, which were later to appear in English speaking countries. He was of course a man of the old school, namely in the tradition of the extensive mediaeval *exempla*-literature. He built particularly on the work of certain British Protestant writers, who had published a few books full of frightening stories in the late sixteenth century about God's judgements on old and young sinners and blessings on good people.<sup>6</sup>

Around 1670, some of Matthew Poole's notes came via friends into the hands of Increase Mather, who worked as a minister amongst the Puritan colonists in New-England. In order to keep alive the memory amongst them and their posterity of the special care God had bestowed on the pioneers in America, he took the initiative to gather all kinds of 'illustrious providences' from the recent past. He asked his colleagues to send him testimonies of miraculous events that were known by them. The result was the publication in 1684 of a catalogue of providences, meant to be the forerunner of a similar more extensive work. Mather had hoped that another scholar, with more time and energy than him, would undertake such work sometime. In the meantime, his own work was enthusiastically received and he wrote more books about the invisible world, amongst them the notorious witch-trials of Salem of 1692.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography* 46, 99–100. He fled to Amsterdam in 1678 and was buried in the English Church at the Begijnhof one year later.

<sup>6</sup> Batman S., *The doome warning all men to the iudgemente* (London: 1581; reprint Delmar: 1984); Beard Th., *The theatre of Gods iudgements* (London: 1597); Rudierd E., *The thunderbolt of Gods wrath* (London: 1618).

<sup>7</sup> Mather I., *An essay for the recording of illustrious providences* (Boston: 1684; facsimile:

Mather worked with John Dunton, a publisher, who first lived in Boston, America, and thereafter in London. Dunton understood that the combination of religion and sensation was a recipe for success. His entrepreneurial spirit was large enough to take his chance with William Turner, the greatest collector of remarkable providences. Turner, who had been educated at Oxford University, and had been a minister in the Anglican Church for many years, was a vicar in the community of Walberton in the county of Sussex. Inspired by Mather and Poole, but also by the Reverend Philip Henry, whose notes about miracles in nature and divine revelations had been passed on to him, Turner strove for a certain continuity in the registration of remarkable providences from the seventeenth century which was drawing to a close. Through a prospectus of the publisher and appeals in a few papers he tried to obtain the necessary additions to fill the gaps, to which interested believers clearly responded.<sup>8</sup>

Turner's *opus magnum*, which comprised 223 chapters, appeared in 1697. On the title page the work was 'recommended as useful to ministers in furnishing topics of reproof and exhortation, and to private Christians, for their closets and families'. This remark pointed to the exemplary and didactic function of the work, but the apologetic and scientific objective came clearly to the foreground in the first part of the work. In 'a practical introduction to the history of divine providence', Turner unfolded a system of dogmatics which was needed to serve as a framework in which the numerous, seemingly loose documents of God's intervention in human life could find their proper place. Clearly, as a good Puritan scholar, Turner wanted to preserve the unity of theology and natural philosophy against an emerging scientific revolution. His work was a great attempt to defend in a documentary the belief in God's active role in world events against the rising scepticism of his contemporaries.

It is beyond the scope of this article to further examine the accumulation of stories and sources used by Turner. Some prominent examples will emerge when we deal with the Dutch translation. It will be sufficient to comment that Turner, like his predecessors, in the compilation of providences, drew from a very diverse repertory

---

Delmar 1977); Demos J., *Remarkable providences. Readings on early American history* (Boston: 1991).

<sup>8</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography* 57, 366.

of sources, which varied from printed works of a scholarly or popular nature to anecdotal accounts. Yet, for the present researcher these are actually nothing other than a mixture of science, historiography and folklore. Here in particular lies the great weakness of miracle encyclopaedias as they were the products of the objectives of the writers themselves. The 'empirical basis' for the belief in God's providence could not stop the breakthrough of critical natural sciences. A future for these published stories could only be found in the speculative philosophy of those who wanted to keep faith and science together, or in the private devotion of those who desired to be edified by the example of former generations.

### *The Dutch context*

A few years before the publication of Turner's principal work, the London bookseller John Dunton published a pamphlet about 'the second Spira, being a fearful example of an atheist, who had apostatized from the Christian religion, and dyed in despair at Westminster, December 8, 1692'.<sup>9</sup> The revealing title pointed to the 'first' Spira, an Italian, a Catholic lawyer, who eternally regretted his renunciation of his former conversion to Protestantism. The latter account, published as early as 1550 with a foreword by John Calvin and translated in many languages, was particularly well-known in England through quotes in Bunyan's spiritual autobiography *Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, 1666. Something similar seemed to have occurred with an English student, an atheist who already endured the fires of hell on his deathbed. In a short time Dunton sold 30,000 copies of his pamphlet. However, jealous colleagues pointed out that the second Spira had never existed and neither had the fictitious author who appeared under initials. The publisher had been deceived but he always maintained his innocence.<sup>10</sup>

In the meantime a Dutch translation of this booklet appeared. It was reprinted many times until well into the twentieth century and

<sup>9</sup> Parks, *John Dunton* (note 3) 289–290.

<sup>10</sup> Parks, *John Dunton* (note 3) 57–59; Groenendijk L.F., "Uit de geschiedenis van het exempel, met speciale aandacht voor De Tweede Spira", *Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie* 13 (1989) 88–97; Hall D.D., *World of wonders, days of judgement. Popular religious belief in early New England* (New York: 1989) 152.

until recently it was regarded as historically accurate. The edition of 1693 came with a foreword by Herman Witsius, Professor of Theology in Utrecht. Witsius, who had been unaware of the recent unmasking of the second Spira in England, saw this 'sad end of an atheist' as a warning against the emergence of 'atheism' in his days. This publicity stunt had all to do with the battle which had flared up in the Dutch Reformed Church around Balthasar Bekker of Amsterdam, who, three months before, had been removed from his position by the synod. Influenced by the new Cartesian philosophy, this reformed theologian had arrived at an alternative interpretation of the supernatural world by a different exegesis of the Bible, which he set forth in a series of books under the title *The enchanted world*, which in the end expanded into three volumes. His denial of the active visible role of angels and devils in worldly events was a heavy attack on popular belief in witchcraft, but his righteous colleagues were especially shocked by his evaluation of human reason as a hermeneutic principle.<sup>11</sup>

I would like to mention one of Bekker's opponents here by name, as I regard him as Turner's Dutch counterpart. His name is Jacob Koelman, who was tutored by the orthodox-reformed theologian Gisbertus Voetius, 'that most learned, judicious, and holy man', as Increase Mather called him in 1684.<sup>12</sup> His ministerial career ended in dismissal by the authorities as a consequence of his rigorous pietistic endeavours for a 'further reformation' of the Church. Koelman was very influential as a writer and translator of practical-theological literature. He was a great admirer of British Puritanism and has made many works accessible to the Dutch market. He also became the founder of the Dutch tradition of the spiritual biography through his collection of 'twenty examples of early converted children who died in infancy', which appeared in 1679 and were taken from various English sources.<sup>13</sup>

However, Koelman was not only a theologian and pastor, but he was also doctor of philosophy. Hence his immediate resort to his pen after the publication of the first works of Balthasar Bekker in

---

<sup>11</sup> Fix A., *Fallen Angels. Balthasar Bekker, Spirit Belief, and Confessionalism in the Seventeenth Century Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht: 1999) 151–155 composed his epilogue around the second Spira as if he really existed.

<sup>12</sup> Mather referred regularly the disputations of Voetius in his work; cf. Mather, *Essay* (note 7) 168, 198, 213, 259, 260, 265, 281 and 294 (the quoted description of Voetius on p. 281).

<sup>13</sup> Groenendijk, "Geschiedenis van het exempel", (note 10).

1692, to skilfully counter his Cartesianism. He moreover wrote a separate defence of traditional, Aristotelian reformed thought a long time after Bekker had been removed from office. Particularly in this polemic context we find the early reception in the Netherlands of the English tradition of 'remarkable providences'. In order to show that angels and devils can influence human beings, he not only drew from the Bible and Christian literature, but also from contemporary testimonies of sorcery, witchcraft, divination and fortune-telling. For this reason he included many English ghost stories as 'well-verified testimonies' of God's intervention in the life of mankind, including stories from Increase Mather's collection.

If Koelman had known Turner's work he would certainly have devoured them, but it only appeared two years after his death in 1695. I do not know if other people in the Netherlands soon discovered this large book. There was no mention of it in the newly published scholarly review journal, the *Boekzaal van Europe*. The interest for English religious writings had reached its peak at that time, also indicated by the decrease in the number of translations. In 1690 a Cartesian distributor of pamphlets had noticed that purchasers of theological works had become 'wiser' and exchanged works of Bunyan and other English writers for books 'with more pep'.<sup>14</sup> The simplest explanation for the lack of attention for Turner's work is that this work was too voluminous and too expensive for the Dutch market, or to be eligible for a comprehensive translation. It was at least one generation later before the work became more known in the Netherlands, although in a changed religious climate, nevertheless in a traditional Puritan context.

### *The translation of Turner's work*

At the end of 1737 two booksellers in the town of Rotterdam jointly published a small two-part work of 120 and 128 pages in which two translated English religious works were combined.<sup>15</sup> The first part,

<sup>14</sup> Cf. [Walten E.], *Eenige aanmerkingen op een schandaleus en faemroovendt pasquil, genaemdt Vindicie Amstelodamenses, of Contra-spiegel der waerheydt* (. . .), in Knuttel W.P.C., *Catalogus van de pamflettenverzameling, 1486-1853*, nr. 13542, 1690, 31-32.

<sup>15</sup> Full title: *Gods gewoone handelingen met zondige landen en kerken. voorgesteld door den vermaerden heer Joannes Owen, Doctor der H. Godgeleertheit. Waerbij gevoegt is een Spiegel van*

which originally appeared in 1681, consisted of a sermon by the learned Puritan theologian John Owen about the words of Jesus in the gospel of Luke.<sup>16</sup> The other part was a collection of recorded miracles under the title: 'Mirror of God's activity in providences'. The edition carried the required official approval of the Reformed Church. The second section contained a separate title page, which offered a little foretaste of what was to come. It consisted of 'all kinds of remarkable cases', such as: 'wonderful conversions, miraculous healing, extraordinary rescues, warnings through dreams, reward for charity, judgement and punishment of the godless, prediction of future events, etc.' It covered a total of 62 accounts, and according to the title page was 'collected from several writers'—in fact, apart from five, all from Turner's large collection [Fig. 11].

I assume that the same person translated Owen's text, as well as Turner's stories, considering the style and the forewords that prefaced both parts. The identity of this translator remains regrettably unknown. He must have been someone who was more familiar with British than Dutch religious literature. Owen's small work seemed to have been translated on the request of devout people, who feared great calamities for the Netherlands and its people because of the moral decline of the Dutch Church. The writer of the preface compared this situation with the time of King Charles II, a time when England also had plunged into great godlessness and the kingdom was threatened with the collapse of Protestantism. Owen wrote at that time (1681) a booklet about God's judgements on sins, which godly people in England read for their edification. The translator of Owen's text had made some adaptations for the Dutch readers of 1737. Calamity in the form of war and fire was replaced by pre-

---

*Gods werkzame voorzienigheid behelzende veele merkwaardige gevallen, als wonderbare bekeeringen, mirakuleuse genezingen, zeldzame reddingen, enz. Uyt het Engelsch vertaalt.* Rotterdam: Philippus Losel en Jacobus Bosch, 1738.

The second part, the *Spiegel* itself, has its own title page with the year 1737 (see bibliography). The double-edition appeared as early as in 1737 indeed, according to the *Maandelyke uittreksels of Boekzael der geleerde wereld* 45 (November 1737) 598.

<sup>16</sup> Owen J., *An humble testimony unto the goodness and severity of God in his dealing with sinful churches and nations* (London: 1681); cf. Wing, *Short-title catalogue* (note 3) O 762. The 1737 translator apparently did not know that a great part of the same sermon had already been published in Dutch in a collection of English puritan sermons, translated by Johan Hofman, see *Het vervalde christendom, uyt hare sorgeloose doodslaap opgewekt, en aangespoort tot eenen heiligen wandel, op den koninglijken weg des levens* [...] (Utrecht: 1711, reprint Amsterdam: 1742) 149–181.

sent day adversity in the Netherlands such as cattle diseases, floods, the weakening of the sea defences of the dykes, the crisis in agriculture, and the decline of commerce.

As mentioned above the booksellers published Owen's sermon together with Turner's 'mirror of miracles'. In the foreword of the second booklet the translator pointed out that this combination with respect to the contents could readily be justified. Whilst Owen had presented the usual ways of God's dealing with sinners and the means they could employ to avert his punishment, Turner had shown, as it were, the proof of those general rules with the aid of historical examples, that we can never offend God unpunished, but also that we will never suffer his chastening rod in vain. With respect to this the translator also referred to God's longsuffering, which was experienced at the Glorious Revolution of 1688. The punishments which Owen had predicted, and which England had also deserved, were temporarily postponed and the kingdom was delivered from the force of the Antichrist, that meant the Roman-Catholic Church. The writer was clearly an admirer of Prince William of Orange, whose wondrous crossing across the North Sea he specifically referred to in his work. It had been extracted from the historical works of Bishop Gilbert Burnet, chaplain to the British King.

The translator regarded the contemplation of God's wonderful deeds a duty of all men, and certainly of those who believe that He created heaven and earth and that through His providence He daily interferes in world events. In his introduction he made a distinction between two kinds of God's actions. In general He had subjected the work of His hands to the laws of nature. However, sometimes He would let things happen beyond these, for example the recorded miracles of Moses and Jesus. And also those of the Prophets and the Apostles, which they were able to perform in order to confirm the truth of their doctrine and thus convince the people of God's blessings and judgements. In other cases nothing occurred beyond the natural laws, but things are so wonderfully governed that everyone who sees them must see that this is the finger of God. In this sense the story of Joseph or indeed the whole of the history of the people of Israel is a miracle.

The translator goes on to say that although the Bible has already given enough examples of God's providence, the believers must also reflect on the many events after the apostolic time and those which still occur. The history of all times provides us with many extraordinary

examples of God's chastening as well as His compassion. Since few people have the opportunity to purchase many books and to read them, some godly men have zealously collected and passed on in brief such particular displays of God's wrath or goodness. As a pioneer in this field the writer mentions Bishop Ussher, the great light of God's Church in Ireland, who by his early death was however prevented from fulfilling his godly intentions. After him, a certain English divine by name of William Turner, had set his hand to the plough and compiled an extensive 'History of remarkable providences'. The Dutch readers received an abridged selection of some sixty accounts.

*Turner criticised by his translator*

We see a difference if we compare the objective of the translator with that of the original writer. Turner wanted to convince the religious sceptics of his time and even supported experimental science. Hence his exhaustive collection of stories from a range of authoritative, and in particular, mostly English sources. His successor in the Netherlands aimed mainly at a readership of believers. For him the function of examples of chronicled providences was no less important, but perhaps more for the devout than for scholars and godless men. One could learn from the stories that the Lord is good for His children, despite or in spite of all kinds of adversity and oppression. Of course, worldlings could discover that nothing is more profitable than to submit to the Almighty. However, the translator wanted to offer godly souls an historical collection which would encourage them to put all their trust in a great, good and righteous God.

And so the Dutch 'mirror of miracles' was at a first glance only a watered down version of Turner's work. And yet, the translator was like a dwarf whose vista was greater than that of the giant on whose shoulders he had climbed. He was smart enough to notice that the zeal of the English divine was not governed by sagacity. Apart from the fact that too many pages were filled with matters, although good and pious as far as the contents was concerned, that had little to do with the objective of his book, Turner had also included a host of accounts of visions, appearances, and ghost stories. The contents of these were, according to his translator, like fairy tales, and no one with common sense would believe them to be

authentic. He regarded belief in this kind of thing as superstition, which deists and atheists would use to mock religion and even the existence of God. The Christian must guard especially against this.

Here we discover that the Dutch Turner could show his colours as a godly as well as a wise man. It seems that he had not only emphasised but also adapted the didactic value of remarkable providences for the believers. Hereby he critically opposed the seventeenth century worldview of those of kindred spirit whom he warned that not everything that presented itself as a miracle, should be considered as a true miracle, particularly when it concerned supernatural experiences and events. Our eighteenth century man was a child of his time, who busied himself increasingly more radically to test religion with reason. But we cannot say that he was therefore a follower of the Enlightenment, not even of a moderate, Christian Enlightenment. He not only detested the atheists, who had completely abandoned a belief in divine revelation, but he also kept his distance with the deists, who regarded the Almighty as Creator of heaven and earth, who merely allowed the history of the world to move as a clockwork, according to His own plan of natural laws.

It is significant that the 'mirror of God's remarkable providences' opened with an account that was not extracted from Turner's work but from the Scottish minister Robert Millar, an orthodox-Protestant theologian from the more recent past. This preacher had published a two-part work in 1723 about the expansion of the Christian faith and the destruction of paganism in the course of the centuries (of which a Dutch translation appeared in 1742). It contained a delightful passage of the conversion of a 'deist' who by contemplating mount Calvary, amongst Protestants better known as Golgotha, was converted. This Roman Catholic tourist to Palestine ridiculed the tales of the priests about the holy places and relics there, until his mathematical and scientific mind discovered that an ordinary earthquake could not have caused the fissures and clefts in the rocks of the mountain. There was only one explanation: it was the consequence of a catastrophe, which had occurred after the death of Jesus. And so the enlightened man came to believe in God's continuous power over nature.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> See Millar R., *The history of the propagation of Christianity and the overthrow of paganism* (3rd ed. London: 1731) I, 478–479; *Spiegel* (note 15) I–i, 1–2.

As mentioned before, the deliverer of the 'mirror of miracles' regarded many of Turner's accounts too dubious to be passed on to a still new readership. Only the gold that was extracted from the dross could be considered. Yet, the translator did not want to get his fingers burnt by the relatively few stories which he had taken from Turner. He left the accuracy of the traditional accounts to the responsibility of the writers who had originally recorded these, and whose sources he meticulously passed on. Sometimes we cannot escape the impression that only the sensational impact of the story tempted him to include it in his collection. Without reservation he included an unadulterated ghost story about a major who appeared to his friend six weeks after his death, which he had personally promised to do.<sup>18</sup> In some other cases, however, the translator took the liberty of providing an either short or long comment alongside the contents of a Turner-passage: whether an approval in the form of application, or an opinionated comment in the margin, and sometimes also a critical footnote regarding the soundness of doctrine.

His rendering of the story of William Barvick, who had his pregnant spouse drowned in the moors in 1690 is quite revealing. His brother in law, Thomas Losthouse, twice received a vision of this crime and the place where it occurred. Although Turner's translator according to other accounts believed in prophetic dreams, he made a rather evasive comment to this ghostly story. 'May be the above vision was actually experienced, or it may only have existed in Losthouse's imagination, but it is certain (if one would give historical belief to events) that by those means God was to reveal this murder.'<sup>19</sup> He therefore believed in the reality of God's providence, but not in a visible supernatural reality. That also meant that he also had a problem with stories about the role of angels in worldly events, a problem that became topical in Dutch Protestantism since the controversy that surrounded Balthasar Bekker. This will become evident from two of the three summarised records of reception which I would like to give about some 'Turner-stories'.

---

<sup>18</sup> Turner, *Compleat history* (note 3) IV-7, 36; *Spiegel* (note 15) IX-i, 156-157.

<sup>19</sup> Turner, *Compleat history* (note 3) CXIII-18; *Spiegel* (note 15) VIII-v, 152-155.

*The angel of Grynaeus*

I start with a story from the time of the Reformation, which gained the largest international coverage and led to a debate particularly in the Netherlands. The origin goes back to the German Empire top meeting of Spiers in 1529. Present in the following of some dukes were two friends from the Lutheran camp, the well-known Professors Philip Melanchthon from Wittenberg and Simon Grynaeus from Heidelberg. By chance the latter heard a sermon in Spiers by the Roman Catholic Bishop, Johann Faber from Vienna. Appalled by his doctrine about the Holy Mass, Grynaeus wanted to debate this with him. Although Faber publicly agreed, he secretly devised a plan to have his opponent arrested. In the meantime a stranger called during a meal with Grynaeus and his friends. He asked for Melanchthon and warned him that Grynaeus was in imminent danger. Some hours later they indeed were looking for him, but Grynaeus and some friends had already fled the city and had crossed the Rhine by boat.

Who actually was this curious messenger who prevented Faber's challenger from being arrested or from a worse predicament? Melanchthon did everything to discover his identity, but to no avail. Finally he concluded that God Himself had sent a messenger who had just as miraculously returned to heaven as he had appeared on earth. This story about Grynaeus soon spread in Protestant literature. To begin with Melanchthon himself made a note of this in his commentary on the tenth chapter of the book of Daniel, where the prophet gives an account of heavenly appearances.<sup>20</sup> Later on it was included in diverse Latin publications of a theological or biographical nature.<sup>21</sup> It appeared in English literature at the end of the sixteenth century in the aforementioned collection of remarkable providences and a century later in the works of Turner.<sup>22</sup> In the Dutch edition we find a short account in an original biography of Melanchthon of 1662, written by the reformed minister Abraham

<sup>20</sup> Bretschneider C.G. (ed.), *Corpus reformatorum*, vol. 13 (Halle: 1846) 906–907.

<sup>21</sup> Gastius J., *Convivialium sermonum utilibus ac jucundis historiis et sententiis*, vol. 2 (Basel: 1558) 158–161; Manlius J., *Locorum communium collectanea* (Basel: 1562) 17–18; Adam M., *Vitae Germanorum philosophorum* (Heidelberg: 1615) 119 en 191.

<sup>22</sup> Beard, *Theatre of Gods iudgements* (note 6); Batman, *Doome warning* (note 6); Turner, *Compleat history* (note 3) II–16 (13).

van de Corput, whilst the full version appeared in the 'mirror of miracles' of 1737.<sup>23</sup>

The question is, however, the truth of the appearance of the saving angel. Nobody needed to doubt the course of events in Spiers, the dispute with Faber and the flight of Grynaeus, but many Protestant followers could hardly believe that this stranger had indeed been a man sent from heaven. Initially the opinion was that a 'Nicodemite', a secret follower of the Reformation who one way or another was acquainted with Faber's plan, had played a role in this and regarded it his duty to warn Grynaeus. Melancthon would have provided too much proof for his doctrine of guardian angels by spreading this story. His Dutch biographer also was inconclusive in his version of the story. Van de Corput quoted a general statement from Melancthon about God's care for His children by protecting them through the service of angels.

In 1697 Turner associated himself unconcernedly with the positive view of the event. 'I think verily this man was an angel'. Forty years later this small sentence was felt to be too much of a good thing by his Dutch translator. He saw no reason at all to suspect an angel in this story and eagerly clarified his view of the event. He expressed his approach by saying that 'godliness and reason forbid the multiplication of such miracles, without having provided sufficient proof'. It is enough to see a glimpse of God's great care in this historical account, in which someone, whether he was known or not known in Spiers, had learned of a plot against Grynaeus, and whether out of love for reformed religion, or in disgust with such wicked scheme, felt called to warn the godly man. 'This case sufficiently illustrates God's providence over his servants, even without the idea of an angel descending from heaven'.<sup>24</sup>

The Dutch discourse of Grynaeus's angel was not closed with this. Petrus Nieuwland, a reformed minister published in 1765 a comprehensive discussion of the extraordinary deliverance of the 'church reformer' Grynaeus in a collection of historical and philosophical essays.<sup>25</sup> He did not know the story from the Turner translation, but

<sup>23</sup> Corput A. van de, *Het leven ende dood van Philips Melancthon* (Amsterdam: 1662) 69–70; *Spiegel* (note 15) III–x (46–47).

<sup>24</sup> *Spiegel* (note 15) III–x, 47–48.

<sup>25</sup> Nieuwland P., *Letter- en oudheid-kundige verlustigingen* (The Hague: 1765–1769) III–iii, 95–100.

had obviously read the Latin sources, in particular a recent discussion of this in a column on Reformation history by Professor Daniël Gerdes of Groningen.<sup>26</sup> However, Nieuwland departed from the current interpretation that Grynaeus's life had been spared by a Protestant 'Nicodemite'. If this was correct, why could this man not be found in Spiers, and why would he have wanted to keep himself hidden amongst so many existing Protestants? Nieuwland emphasised the thorough search, which Melancthon had conducted to discover the identity of this strange messenger. Since he had not succeeded in finding him, his final conclusion that it must have been an angel was veritable.

Nieuwland's positive understanding of the story of the angel did not stand alone. He saw the event as an excellent example of the hidden and invisible service of angels with regard to the Church and in particular to believers. On the basis of the Bible as well as reason he wanted to give more credit to these means in the hand of God's providence than many of his contemporaries, without getting into fantasy and superstition. He also compared the story with events from classical antiquity and the Middle Ages, and besides that he added a traditional account, which he had learned indirectly from the mouth of a certain Samuel Crellius, who had died in Amsterdam a few years before. His father, Christophorus Crellius, had once fled from Poland to Prussia as a persecuted Protestant, and was helped en route by a man, whose identity was also never discovered afterwards, and supposed to be an angel. At the end I will come back to Nieuwland's position.

### *The conversion of Studley*

The second example refers to a story with Turner as the original source, but which also knew an 'afterlife' in Protestant literature. It concerns the son of a certain man named Studley, a lawyer in the county of Kent and a fierce hater of Puritans in English society. One day, Studley junior found himself in a drunken stupor at a party in London. He stumbled and fell, and imagined himself during

---

<sup>26</sup> Gerdes D., *Historia Reformationis, sive Annales Evangelii saeculo XVI passim per Europam renovati* [...], vol. 2 (Groningen: 1746) 226–227.

the eternity of a moment to be in hell. As a consequence he embarked on his conversion. His father tried to keep him from the trodden path of the godly by every means possible. A trip to France and a stay at an English rural estate did little to deter him. His son only cultivated new Puritans and even the girl he was married off to ultimately changed from an unbelieving bride to an exemplary spouse. Studley was disinherited by his father but regained his assets in a court case. His family life was also full of trials: his little son died in a tub with boiling water, which the distressed mother regarded as God's punishment for her sin of ingratitude.

The vicissitudes of the young Studley and his wife became obviously known in the broader circles of the pious. His good friend Knight who knew the story first hand passed it on to pastor Singleton, a minister in Horton Square in London. He in turn passed it on in writing to William Turner, in answer to his call in the press to forward pieces of information for his collection he intended to publish. And so the story appeared in 1697 in print and was included forty years later in the Dutch translation.<sup>27</sup> The subject that was to appeal to the Protestant readers in this historical account was no doubt the divine providence in the conversion of sinners, one by a fall, the other by his matrimonial lot. The theme referred to God's irresistible grace, which revealed itself in the victory of pure religion, that is to say, that of Puritanism. We could suggest this as the theological or confessional motive of the Studley story.

It is striking, that this particular text of William Turner has made its mark not only in Dutch tradition, but it also influenced British literature. The story was included in the voluminous English book of miracles, in a collection of all kinds of historical accounts of resuscitations, evangelisations, and missions in what was then called Europe and America, and compiled by the Scottish Calvinist John Gillies. This quotation of Studley's account appeared as a footnote to another story, which covered a full page, and well as an example of 'the hatred of some at serious religion, under the name of Puritanism, in those days'.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, not so much the strictly religious but rather the sociological motive played a part in order to bring with

<sup>27</sup> Turner, *Compleat history* (note 3) XVIII–33; *Spiegel* (note 15) I–iii, 4–13.

<sup>28</sup> Gillies J., *Historical collections relating to remarkable periods of the success of the gospel, and eminent instruments employed in promoting it* (Glasgow: 1754) III–1, 171–174 (reprint 1845: 102–104).

this publication the conversion of the young Studley again to the attention of godly readers.

The story clearly still carried a third motive, namely a pedagogic one, and it concerned the responsibility of young people to chose a godly spouse and refrain from being yoked to an unbeliever. This appeal came to the foreground in a Dutch publication in 1799 from Jan van Eyk of Loosduinen, a Reformed minister. His book was a collection of religious biographies of young and old devout people to serve as examples, 'together with clear signs of divine providence' with the remarkable experiences of Studley as a sixth example, 'for the benefit of young people'. By means of the latter the writer warned not to enter into marriage with an unbelieving partner, even if it was against the wish of your parents.<sup>29</sup> As late as 1885 Studley's story was taken from this booklet of Jan van Eyk and included in a Dutch collection which was promoted as a 'free gift' with the purchase of a Reformed 'tear-off' calendar, one of the most popular forms of edifying literature, in the time of mass production by the printing press of the nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup>

### *Five miraculous cases of healing*

In the 'Mirror of God's activity in providence' of 1737, 'chapter I, which comprises miraculous and unexpected conversions of godless sinners', is followed by a chapter on 'miraculous healing of sickness and infirmities'. These are the five stories in this section, which, apart from Studley's account, have influenced literary tradition, although to a lesser degree and in this case completely through the Dutch translation of Turner's small work. The origin of the first of the five stories is found in early history of Christendom. It concerned a lame Jew of Constantinople, who was baptised during the episcopacy of Atticus (406–425), and regained his health during the administration of the sacrament. The account appeared for the first time from the

---

<sup>29</sup> Eyk J. van, *Bewestiging der waarheid door voorbeelden van vroeg bekeerden en jong gestorvenen, als ook bejaarde menschen, benevens eenige spreekende daden der godlijke voorzienigheid* (Rotterdam: 1799) 85–96.

<sup>30</sup> Fuik R., *Het vaste fundament Gods staat. Ervaringen uit het leven van beroemde mannen. Present-exemplaar voor de intekenaren op de 'Honigdroppele', Gereformeerde scheurkalender voor 1885* (Leiden: s.a. [= 1885]) 51–59.

hand of the classical church historian Socrates Scholasticus. Incidentally, his work was translated in 1588 into Dutch, which included the record of the healing of the Jew.<sup>31</sup>

Turner could, however, have included in his work miraculous cases of healing from his own time and environment. Remarkable events had indeed occurred in the last quarter of the seventeenth century amongst the French Protestants, who had spread throughout Europe in great numbers. A tensed mixture of disappointment as a consequence of the persecution by Louis XIV, and of hope for a Protestant alliance under the leadership of the English King William, held sway with them. Chiliasm amongst leading theologians in exile and prophetism amongst ordinary farmers in the Cevennes were expressions of this, but also news of remarkable experiences amongst the Huguenots, such as hearing angelic choirs in the sky and unexplainable cases of healing, must be put in this context. Through international 'pastoral letters' but also in pamphlets which were distributed in England and Holland, this news soon circulated amongst many Protestants and incidentally, also amongst critical Roman-Catholics.

In the large French community in London, several cases of healing took place. Mariana Maillard, a domestic was crippled since her first birthday. She read a chapter from the gospel of Mark about the healing of a cripple after returning home from a church service. Inspired by the strength of his faith, she rose and could walk again! This case was acknowledged as a miracle by many fellow believers in London and was recorded by a solicitor. One person remained doubtful, namely a shoemaker and preacher called Savage, but his eyes were soon to be opened. His spouse had a paralysed hand, but she also was suddenly delivered from this condition one evening when she read about the miracles of Jesus, this time from the gospel of Matthew. Through Turner's book both testimonies appeared in the Dutch edition of 1737, together with another story, about a certain Mrs. Mangot, widow of a surgeon in the French town of Caen, who in 1687 also had been healed from many years of paralysis, and at that time had uttered hopeful prophecies about the future of the Huguenots.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *Historia Ecclesiastica, dat is warachtighe beschrijvinge aller ouder christelicker kercken* (Dordrecht: 1588; reprint Dordrecht: 1613) 470.

<sup>32</sup> Turner, *Compleat history* (note 3) LXXXII-15 (114) = *Spiegel* II-ii, 16-17 (juffr.

Most interesting is the fifth medical miracle included in the Dutch Turner translation, this time with a commentary about its interpretation. The story referred to the healing of Samuel Wallace, a shoemaker in Lincolnshire, which had occurred as early as 1659, after he had suffered from tuberculosis for thirteen years. One day at Pentecost when he was reading a sermon, an old traveller suddenly came to his door. He had a drink with him and they talked together. In order to be cured from his illness, the stranger advised him to follow a special course made from the leaves of red sage and bloodwort. During the conversation he kept on saying: Fear God and serve Him. Wallace promised to follow the recipe and was wonderfully cured. Everyone was amazed and a number of preachers from the area called a special meeting about this. According to the record in William Turner's collection, they came to the conclusion that the strange traveller could have been none other than an angel of God.<sup>33</sup>

However, the Dutch translator could not come to terms with the explanation of this healing by the English theologians. Someone meets a sick man, gives him advice, which later on seemed to have worked. Should you conclude from this that an angel had come from heaven? Those who reason like this open ways for atheists and the godless to mock and scoff at God's ways. That no one in the neighbourhood saw the strange old man is no proof. Perhaps it could have been a famous doctor who happened to pass by. It is also known that some herbs have great therapeutic properties. Perhaps there were reasons that God wanted to teach Samuel a spiritual lesson. Whatever the case, there was insufficient cause to think of a medical miracle and an epiphany. This was really within the limits of God's providence, according to Turner's critical translator.

It is curious that the chapter with the five cases of miraculous healing in the translation of 1737 was re-published as late as 1934 in a Dutch series with edifying examples aimed at reformed youngsters. It did not appear separately, but as an addition to the reprint of a story from 1861 concerning the extraordinary healing of a fifteen

---

Mangot); LXXXII-27 (115-116) = *Spiegel* II-iii, 17-19 (Mariana Maillard); LXXXII-11 (112) = *Spiegel* II-iv, 19-21 (Mrs. Savage); cf. Schwartz H., *The French Prophets. The history of a millenarian group in eighteenth-century England* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: 1980) 69, 99-100 en 241-242.

<sup>33</sup> Turner, *Compleat history* (note 3) II-7 = *Spiegel* (note 15) II-v (21-26).

year old boy from a village in the province of South-Holland. The publisher, Jan Pieter van den Tol of Nieuw-Beijerland, added a few stories relating to the same theme, which he had uncovered from his personal library of old Protestant works. They included amongst others 'Some miraculous cases of the healing of diseases and infirmities from the account of William Turner, the English divine', that is to say the stories about the baptised Jew, the three Huguenot ladies and Samuel Wallace, the Englishman. Even the sceptical commentary about the epiphany by the eighteenth century translator was included in its entirety!<sup>34</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The first edition of the 'Mirror of God's activity in providence' of 1737, may not have been a best-seller. However, forty years later, the bookseller Samuel de Waal of Utrecht, saw the potential of a re-print. Within a few years he published a third edition.<sup>35</sup> There was certainly interest in it, although it is not easy to determine in which social environment these should be sought in the first place. On the one hand one can think of the traditional Pietistic circles, in which interest in edifying literature, spiritual biographies and stories about miracles live on even in our days. On the other hand one can think of Protestant groups in which more attempts had been made to connect Christian ideas with shifting philosophical, theological and pedagogical opinions. The agents of the Enlightenment, who in particular targeted national education, had already published collections of moralistic stories in which in a more or less critical manner 'true histories' and 'remarkable events' in nature and in human life had been included.

In any case, my study about the production and reception of a collection of stories of miracles has shown that we should not too quickly associate the circulation of 'remarkable providences' with a

---

<sup>34</sup> Tol J.P. van den, *De macht van den Heere Jezus Christus gebleken in de wonderbare geneezing van Jan Struik te Vuren bij Gorinchem op 28 april 1861* (Nieuw-Beijerland: 1934) 23–30.

<sup>35</sup> The second edition (held by the University Library of the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam) as well as the third edition (recently found in a particular collection) was again type-set. The catalogue of Dutch books of Arrenberg mentions an edition by Samuel de Waal in 1779; De Waal was active until 1785.

growing split between elite and folk culture or with the decline of a magical universe during the early modern period. On the contrary there was clear interest from an intellectual perspective for oral and written traditions of which the veracity sometimes rested on the credibility and respectability of eye- and ear-witnesses. Nevertheless we can say that a translation lavished with comments of a collection of stories, forty years after the original publication demonstrated, how one could deal more critically with news about manifestations of the supernatural world. Yet, this was also not a linear process, as was suggested by Weberian concepts, as if the rationalisation of the experience of reality was only a question of a growing dominance in culture and ever broader participation in society.

Let me give some further examples in relation to Turner's work. In connection with the discussion about the deliverance of Grynaeus from an anti-Protestant liquidation, I mention Nieuwland, a Reformed minister, who took up the case of the activities of guardian angels. He published at the same time a defence of belief in supernatural beings in general, which caused a polemic 'ghost-dispute' in 1766. He was soon painted as a stiff Calvinist who was behind the times with preachers who had accepted the once detested doctrine of Balthasar Bekker.<sup>36</sup> However, in reality Nieuwland was not in the least a short-sighted orthodox theologian still troubled with old-fashioned superstition. On the contrary he was actually interested in new philosophical movements, like the ideas of German writers such as Leibniz and Wolff, who offered an alternative for a mechanical worldview by also giving attention to religious, psychological and cosmological dimensions. Anticipating Romanticism, he seemed, as it were, to have already passed the Enlightenment.

In this context we should also see the last reference to Turner's work, which I have uncovered in Dutch intellectual literature. This was in a work by William Greve, a medical doctor, and follower of Mesmerism and at the same time of the mystical Pietism of Jung-Stilling, who as a theologian had also been involved in the 'science of spiritualism'.

Greve published a booklet in 1815 about prophetic dreams, and used the 'Mirror of God's activity in providence' from 1737 as supportive examples. He agreed with Nieuwland by quoting the story

---

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Waardt H. de, *Toverij en samenleving in Holland 1500-1800* (Amsterdam: 1990) 259-261.

of Grynaeus as evidence for the existence of angels who intervene in the life of Christians. But he also quoted the typical Turner story of the major who six weeks after his death appeared to his friend, which I have already mentioned in this article. In this case Greve warned his readers actually against 'the manifold superstition of ghosts and appearances of spirits in the mind of ordinary folk.'<sup>37</sup>

Finally: if something is confirmed in this article, then it is the evidence that Protestantism, however dismissive it may be of superstition and the adoration of saints, has no fewer stories about models of godliness and remarkable events than Roman Catholicism. As earlier Protestant theologians and historians have mostly overlooked this 'irrational' side of their tradition, there is still much research to be done to do justice to the complex historical reality of religious culture. It is clear that this is foremost an interdisciplinary task because of the extremely diverse contents (natural, supernatural), means of distribution (oral, hand-written, printed) and processes of appropriation (intellectual, devout) of the enormous treasure of stories which lie heaped up in pamphlets, collections, and more hidden in biographies, sermons and tracts. And last but not least the Low Countries form a fertile field for research due to its strong reading and spoken culture, the intensive book-trade and translation practice and the great reception afforded to traditions from surrounding regions.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Greve W., *Verzameling van merkwaardige droomen en gebeurtenissen, voorafgegaan van eenige aanmerkingen op zeker werkje genaamd: Droomen en gedachten over dezelve* (Amsterdam: 1815) 8–9.

<sup>38</sup> Leading studies are in addition to the references in note 4: Brückner W. (ed.), *Volkserzählung und Reformation. Ein Handbuch zur Tradierung und Funktion von Erzählstoffen und Erzählliteratur im Protestantismus* (Berlin: 1974); Schenda R., *Von Mund zu Ohr. Bausteine zu einer Kulturgeschichte volkstümlichen Erzählens in Europa* (Göttingen: 1993); Fox A., *Oral and literate culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford: 2000); Beyer J., *Lutheran lay prophets, c. 1550–c. 1700* (Mainz: 2004).

*Selective Bibliography*

- EYK J. VAN, *Bevestiging der waarheid door voorbeelden van vroeg bekeerden en jong gestorvenen, als ook bejaarde menschen, benevens eenige spreekende daden der godlijke voorzienigheid* (Rotterdam: 1799).
- GILLIES J., *Historical collections relating to remarkable periods of the success of the gospel, and eminent instruments employed in promoting it* (Glasgow: 1754; reprint Kelso: 1845, Fairfield: 1981).
- GREVE W., *Verzameling van merkwaardige droomen en gebeurtenissen, voorafgegaan van eenige aanmerkingen op zeker werkje genaamd: Droomen en gedachten over dezelve* (Amsterdam: 1815).
- MATHER I., *An essay for the recording of illustrious providences* (Boston: 1684; facsimile: Delmar 1977).
- , *Remarkable providences illustrative of the earlier days of American colonisation* (London: 1856, reprints London: 1890, New York: 1977 and Portland: 1997).
- MILLAR R., *The history of the propagation of Christianity and the overthrow of paganism* (1st edition: 2 vols. Edinburgh: 1723, 3rd ed. London: 1731; Dutch translation: *Histori van de voortplanting van den kristelijken godsdienst en van den ondergang des heidendoms* (Amsterdam: 1742).
- NIEUWLAND P., *Letter- en oudheid-kundige verlustigingen* (The Hague: 1765–1769).
- Spiegel van Gods werkzame voorzienigheid, vertoonende allerhande merkwaardige gevallen, als wonderbare bekeeringe, mirakeleuze genezinge, zeldzame reddingen en behoudingen, waarschouwvingen door droomen, belooningen van mildadigheid, oordeelen en straffen van godloozen, voorspellingen van toekomende zaken, enz. Uit verscheiden schrijvers bijeen vergadert* (Rotterdam: 1737).
- TURNER W., *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences, both of judgement and mercy, which have hapned in this age* (London: 1697).

*Secondary Literature*

- BERGAMASCO L. “Hagiographie et sainteté en Angleterre aux XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles”, in: *Annales ESC* 48 (1993) 1053–1085.
- BEYER J., *Lutheran lay prophets, c. 1550–c. 1700* (Mainz: 2004).
- BRÜCKNER W. (ed.), *Volkserzählung und Reformation. Ein Handbuch zur Tradierung und Funktion von Erzählstoffen und Erzählliteratur im Protestantismus* (Berlin: 1974).
- CAT M.L.H.M. LE, *Protestantism crossing the seas. A short-title catalogue of English books printed before 1801 illustrating the spread of Protestant thought and the exchange of ideas between the English-speaking countries and the Netherlands held by the University Library of the Vrije Universiteit at Amsterdam* (‘t Goy-Houten: 2000).
- GREYERZ K. VON, *Vorsehungsglaube und Kosmologie. Studien zu englischen Selbstzeugnissen des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen/Zürich: 1990).
- HALL D.D., *World of wonders, days of judgement. Popular religious belief in early New England* (New York: 1989).
- PARKS S., *John Dunton and the English book trade. A study of his career with a checklist of his publications* (New York/London: 1976).
- THOMAS K., *Religion and the decline of magic. Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (London: 1971).
- WALSHAM A., *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: 1999).

*This page intentionally left blank*

FROM MINISTER TO SACRED ORATOR:  
HOMILETICS AND RHETORIC IN THE SEVENTEENTH  
AND EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY DUTCH REPUBLIC

P.J. Schuffel

*Introduction*

On November 8, 1721, Leiden University's theology professor Franciscus Fabricius (1663–1738) was 'publicly honoured with a new title, a new honourable office, and a new professorship of sacred rhetoric, that [...] has not been preceded in this Academy'.<sup>1</sup> It is not completely clear why the university decided to create this new professorship.<sup>2</sup> It had previously been customary for one of the theology professors to lecture on homiletics, as Fabricius had done. According to the resolutions of the curators, it was because he had lectured so well that he was being appointed to the new professorship: 'for many years, to this very day, his instruction of the theology students in public preaching was highly valued and received great admiration'.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that the Faculty of Theology now deemed it necessary to found a separate professorship of sacred rhetoric might indicate a certain institutionalisation of the Reformed way of preaching. Furthermore, and this is what this paper will discuss, the name 'sacred

---

<sup>1</sup> '[...] ge hebt ze [myne moeite] in 't openbaer met een nieuwen tittel, met een nieuw eeramt, met een nieuw Hoogleeraerschap van de HEILIGE REDENEERKUNDE, tot nogh toe, [...], in deeze Akademi nooit gehoort, willen vereeren'. Fabricius F., *De heilige redevoerder* [...] (Leiden: 1728) 61. According to the resolutions of the curators it was decided on November 8, 1721 to confer upon Fabricius the 'professio Oratoriae Sacrae'. On June 8, 1722 Fabricius held his inaugural address. Molhuysen P.C., *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, vol. 4 (The Hague: 1920) 328, 333.

<sup>2</sup> Molhuysen, *Bronnen* (note 1) gives no further information about the reasons for the foundation of this professorship. Fabricius makes no comment on it in his inaugural speech.

<sup>3</sup> '[...] veele jaren herwaarts [tot op deze dag] met een groot applaussement en confluentie [samenkomst] geïnstrueert heeft in 't publycq prediken der studenten in de Theologie'. Molhuysen, *Bronnen* (note 1) 328.

rhetoric' indicates—or at least suggests—a close relationship between homiletics and rhetoric. Such a relationship is not immediately obvious—whatever a minister's reputation as a public speaker—because views on the relationship between these two disciplines have not always been the same. Since the art of rhetoric had been developed by pagans, it was always necessary to justify the application of these rules to a Christian sermon. But as early as the fourth century, Saint Augustine argued that all that is sound and useful in rhetoric could be turned to a Christian use. In addition, homiletics and rhetoric are closely related in the work of reformers like Erasmus and Melancthon.

In his inaugural lecture, *Orator sacer* (1722), which was translated into Dutch as *De heilige redevoerder* (1728), Fabricius emphatically defends the use of rhetoric by ministers. Authors who had previously dealt with the subject of Reformed homiletics were clearly less eager to draw attention to this relationship. They certainly made use of rhetoric, but generally regarded it as a distinct discipline. This article will be exploring the possibility that this new professorship of sacred rhetoric signified a change in the relationship between Reformed homiletics and rhetoric. In other words: to what extent did Reformed preaching manuals from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries make use of rhetoric? What approach did they use and, when this changed, how did it do so? In this connection, I will first summarise the views on this relationship in the work of the most influential pre-seventeenth century authors. From these views I will derive the focal points in this discussion. I will then continue exploring the way in which these aspects were dealt with in seventeenth and early eighteenth century Dutch treatises on preaching theory.

### *Tradition: from Chrysostom to Keckermann*

The debate concerning the relationship between homiletics and rhetoric probably dates from the earliest beginnings of Christianity. Partly due to its pagan origins, but also to the fact that the purposes for which rhetoric had been developed (winning lawsuits, political persuasion or speaking on special occasions) differed markedly from the primary aim of preachers (to proclaim the word of God), it was certain that classical rhetoric would not be adopted uncritically for use in Christian speaking or writing. The following section

provides an overview of the most important concepts and authors, from the time of the church fathers to the sixteenth century.

The first important theoretical work on preaching, *Peri hierosynes* (*On priesthood*), was written by Chrysostom (ca. 347–407), one of the fathers of the Eastern Church. He took the view that only two qualities are of major importance for preachers, viz. the power of preaching well and indifference to the praise of the audience. He stated that while the Word of God is the only way to salvation, preachers still need eloquence to preach well. Since they are supposed to speak the truth without any abundant embellishment, preachers must master plainness of speech. Such skills do not develop spontaneously, but only by the study and continuous exercise of rhetoric. He put great emphasis on the fact that preachers should not value the judgement of others, whether it be favourable or unfavourable. Ambitious pagan orators might seek the admiring applause of their listeners, Christian preachers should only desire to please God.<sup>4</sup>

Whereas the work of Chrysostom mainly consists of reflections on preaching, the fourth book of *De doctrina Christiana* by Saint Augustine (354–430) can be considered the first real manual on the subject.<sup>5</sup> Although Augustine thought that wisdom in preaching is more important than eloquence, he believed that Christians should nevertheless apply themselves to this art. He stated that

[. . .] oratorical ability, so effective a resource to commend either right or wrong, is available to both sides; why then is it not acquired by good and zealous Christians to fight for the truth, if the wicked employ it in the service of iniquity and error, to achieve their perverse and futile purposes?<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Chrysostom, *Treatise Concerning the Christian Priesthood*, ed. W.R.W. Stephens (New York: 1889) 4.3, 4.6–9, 5.1–8.

<sup>5</sup> Augustine argues at the beginning of this work that there are two things on which all interpretation of Scripture depends: the process of revealing the proper meaning, and the process of making known this meaning when it is revealed ('modus inveniendi quae intelligenda sunt, et modus proferendi quae intellecta sunt', I.1). The first three books—written in 396–397—treat the first subject. The fourth book was written thirty years later (finished in 427) and deals with presentation, or homiletic matters.

<sup>6</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, ed. R.P.H. Green (Oxford-New York: 1997) book IV, II.3.

While perspicuity should be the most important aim of Christian eloquence, sermons should also be elegant. He drew a distinction between a pagan orator and a Christian one, stating that the latter can and must be sure that the Holy Spirit will make him say what he ought to, and in the way he ought to. But this does not imply that preachers do not need to study. Augustine compared this situation with prayer: God gives us what we need, but expects us to make an effort ourselves to obtain it.<sup>7</sup>

Augustine assumed that the basic principles of rhetoric were commonly known. He only discussed those aspects that needed to be adjusted to the Christian situation. Following Cicero's lead, he argued that preachers have three goals: to instruct, to delight and to move. In preaching, instructing is the most essential of the three, but one can only convince the listener by moving him. These goals correspond to the three traditional styles. The simple style instructs, the mediocre style delights, but the sublime moves and conquers the hearer's will. For obvious reasons, the classical theory of the *genera dicendi* is only partially applicable to preaching. Whereas the Christian orator is always dealing with great matters, he can not restrict himself to the *genus grande*. He should vary his manner of speaking in such a way that he—and the truth he proclaims—will be listened to with understanding, pleasure and obedience.<sup>8</sup> Augustine ended his treatise by stressing that it is essential for preachers to lead a life that is in harmony with their own teaching, in order to set a good example. Even moderate speakers can accomplish a great deal through appropriate behaviour, while excellent orators can ruin all of their teachings by leading a wicked life.<sup>9</sup>

Augustine's belief in the power of secular rhetoric, in its value for preaching, and in the need to adapt it to Christian purposes, provided the frame of reference for subsequent theories of preaching.

---

<sup>7</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* (note 6) book IV, I.2; V.7–VI.10; XI.26; XV.32–XVI.34. Augustine refers to the *Book of Wisdom* (Catholic Canon) 7:16 'For both we and our words are in his hand' and quotes Matth. 10:19–20: '[...] do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. You will be given at that moment what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.'

<sup>8</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* (note 6) book IV, XII.27–XIV.31; XVIII.35–XVI.58.

<sup>9</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* (note 6) book IV, XXVII.59–XXX.63.

The Middle Ages—a period in which relatively few treatises on this subject were written—were followed by a period of increasing interest in sacred rhetoric. The tension between the ‘secular’ and the ‘sacred’ continued to be significant, although humanist writers clearly regarded the sermon as the modern equivalent of classical oration. The two most important authors on the theory of preaching during the first decades of the Reformation were Philippus Melanchthon (1497–1560) and Desiderius Erasmus (ca. 1466–1536).

Melanchthon wrote several treatises on rhetoric and homiletics, in which his view gradually changed. *De rhetorica libri tres* (1519) and *Elementorum rhetorices libri duo* (1531) were rhetorical manuals, in which he also dealt with religious topics. Although Melanchthon never explicitly indicated that he intended the *Elementa* to be a textbook on homiletics, it has often been perceived as such. Indeed, many works on preaching theory from the second half of the sixteenth century refer to the general rhetorical rules that it contained. In these works, Melanchthon stated that preachers only differ from orators in terms of subject matter, which, in the case of sermons, is exclusively derived from Scripture. However, this does not affect the application of rhetorical (and dialectical) rules. Since the methodical duties of orators and preachers were governed by the same laws, preachers should adhere closely to rhetorical theory. According to Melanchthon, of the three classical *genera causarum* only two are useful to preachers, viz. the *genus deliberativum* and the *genus demonstrativum*. He made no mention of the *genus iudiciale*. Concerning the *officia oratoris*, he restricted himself to a discussion of the first three (*inventio*, *dispositio* and *elocutio*). He did not comment on *memoria*, and with regard to *actio* he simply stated that contemporary beliefs differed greatly from those in antiquity. Delivery is best learned from good examples.<sup>10</sup>

Between 1529 and 1551, Melanchthon also wrote a few brief and often fragmentary works in which he attempted to develop a homiletic theory. Some examples are “De officiis concionatoris” (1529) and *De modo et arte concionandi* (written between ca. 1537 and 1539). In these works, he attempted to find the basis for his homiletic theory in the

<sup>10</sup> Schnell U., *Die homiletische Theorie Philippp Melanchthons* (Berlin: 1968) 7–8, 52–53, 60–63, 168; Shuger D.K., *Sacred Rhetoric. The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton NJ: 1988) 65–68.

Bible, while he regarded the laws of rhetoric as less useful in sermons. In "De officiis concionatoris", Melanchthon defined specific *genera* for the sermon. These were the *genus didascalicum*, the *genus epitrepticum* and the *genus paraeneticum*, which were intended to achieve instruction, exhortation and consolation respectively. He adhered to the classical idea that the speaker must be moved to move others, linking this to personal experience of the Holy Spirit and God's word. He strongly rejected the notion of paying particular attention to eloquence, verbal play and figural ornamentation, since this distracts listeners from the sincerity of the preacher and the power of the Spirit. He made no further mention of the *genera dicendi*.<sup>11</sup> This point of view was very different from the one he expressed in his rhetorical manuals. Accordingly, these works became the source for a subsequent, and completely different, group of sixteenth century sermon manuals. These are characterised by a dismissal, or at least distrust, of rhetorical means to achieve elevated and ardent language.

Erasmus, like Melanchthon, published several works on rhetoric. Unlike his contemporary, however, he set out his views on homiletics in a single work, entitled *Ecclesiastes, sive concionator evangelicus* (1535), in which he adapted several principles of classical rhetoric to the situation in the pulpit. Erasmus stated that, during a sermon, it is essential that the eyes of the preacher express his pervasion by the Holy Spirit. Like Augustine, he stressed that this did not mean that preachers should not be trained in rhetoric or dialectic. On the contrary, very few people are so talented as to require no such training. He recommended that preachers master the precepts of rhetoric and dialectic by frequent use and practice, until these almost became part of their natural behaviour. Only then would they be able to employ these arts without drawing attention to it.<sup>12</sup> Erasmus went on to discuss all elements of classical rhetoric in terms of their use in sermons. He started with the structure of the sermon, which contains *exordium*, *narratio* (which he only mentioned, giving no further

---

<sup>11</sup> To this group of works by Melanchthon also belong: "Quomodo concionator novitus", written between 1531 and 1536, and his commentary on I Corinthians and I Timothy from 1550–1551. Most of these works were not meant for publication. *De modo et arte concionandi* nevertheless achieved considerable popularity and was reprinted several times. Schnell, *Homiletische Theorie* (note 10) 52–53, 63–83, 113–114, 169–171; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (note 10) 65–68.

<sup>12</sup> Kleinhaus R.G., *Erasmus' Doctrine of Preaching: a Study of Ecclesiastes, sive De Ratione Concionandi* (Ann Arbor: 1969) 51–52.

explanation), *divisio* (under which he dealt with all kinds of argumentation) and *epilogus*. After this he goes into *dispositio*, *memoria* and *pronuntiatio*. Concerning the former, he discussed the order of the words, of the arguments, of the propositions within an argument and of the entire sermon. He stated that *memoria* depended largely on the ability of the preacher to order the sermon's topics and images. His treatment of *pronuntiatio* dealt with the precepts for a suitable voice, facial expression and gestures. He was strongly in favour of natural behaviour. Rhetorical rules should therefore be followed intelligently, since misplaced adherence to them could lead to affectation. At the end of book III, Erasmus discussed *elocutio* in great detail. He described different ways of stirring emotions, and recommended figures of thought, vivid depiction of biblical scenes, dramatisation, and imagery.<sup>13</sup>

While homiletics and rhetoric are closely related, a certain distrust of classical *elocutio* and *actio* can be traced to the homiletic works of Melanchthon. Instead of these techniques, Melanchthon favoured the personal experience of the preacher. According to Erasmus, however, *elocutio* and *actio* are of major importance to preachers. The same dichotomy of opinion can be witnessed in treatises from the second half of the sixteenth century. Some of these works emphasise the demonstration of the preacher's pervasion by the Holy Spirit and pay less attention to *elocutio* (especially *ornatus*) and *actio*. Others put great value on these techniques, without denying the influence of the Spirit. The following will provide examples from both sides of this divide.

William Perkins (1558–1602), an important representative of the English Puritans, follows Melanchthon in discarding the *genera dicendi* and *elocutio*.<sup>14</sup> He considered the preaching of his time to be over-oratorical. Listeners paid more attention to the form of such sermons than to their content. He therefore preferred a plain style, which intentionally dismisses obvious ornament, learned allusions and

---

<sup>13</sup> Kleinhans, *Erasmus' Doctrine of Preaching* (note 12) 53–64; Strien A. van, "Aen sommige predikers", in *Constantijn Huygens, Mengelingh* (Amsterdam: 1990) 150–151; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (note 10) 63–64.

<sup>14</sup> See J. Lares, *Milton and the Preaching Arts* (Pittsburgh: 2001) on the importance of Andreas Hyperius (1511–1564) to Protestant homiletics, especially as a mediator between Melanchthon and Perkins.

other ways of achieving beauty of expression.<sup>15</sup> He propounded these ideas in *Prophetica, sive de sacra et unica ratione concionandi, tractatus* (Latin 1592, English 1607). He divided his treatment of preaching into preparation and promulgation, or delivery. In his discussion of preparation, he first dealt extensively with the explanation of scriptural text. Next, he addresses the 'right cutting of the word' (II Tim. 2: 15), by which he means the gathering of doctrines and the application thereof. During the promulgation of the sermon, there are two main requirements. Preachers must hide human wisdom, and demonstrate the Holy Spirit. Their language used should be plain and transparent. The minister must behave in such a way that it is clear that it is not so much he who speaks, but the Spirit of God in and through him. Yet, this does not reduce the minister to a passive medium for the Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not simply pass through the speaker, but it arouses him and enables him to stir others. Only when a minister is possessed by a love of God can he kindle such love in others. In addition to this, it is just as important that ministers lead immaculate lives. The lessons contained in the sermon being hard to understand and to practise, it is vital that the minister sets a good example, by practising what he preaches. As far as gestures are concerned, Perkins felt that only the most basic precepts could be given. Instead, one should simply follow the examples set by the best preachers.<sup>16</sup>

*Rhetoricae ecclesiasticae sive artis formandi et habendi conciones sacras, libri duo* (1600), written by Perkins's German contemporary Bartholomaeus Keckermann (ca. 1571–1608), is a good example of the other side of the divide. In this work Keckermann reveals his indebtedness to Erasmus, whom he frequently quotes. His treatment of the preparation of the sermon is in accordance with classical rhetoric, involving *inventio*, *dispositio* and *elocutio*. He represents the sermon as a body. Invention gives it bones and nerves, arrangement binds them together and expression provides flesh and blood, warmth and colour.<sup>17</sup> With regard to the latter, Keckermann urges the use of exaggeration and

<sup>15</sup> Perkins W., "The Art of Prophesying", in *The Work of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Brevard (Appleton-Abingdon: 1970) 327; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (note 10) 68–69.

<sup>16</sup> Perkins, "Prophesying" (note 15) 325–349; Baarsel J.J. van, *William Perkins. Eene bijdrage tot de kennis der religieuse ontwikkeling in Engeland ten tijde van Koningin Elisabeth* (The Hague: 1912) 281–286; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (note 10) 69–70.

<sup>17</sup> Zuylen W.H. van, *Bartholomaeus Keckermann. Sein Leben und Wirken* (Leipzig: 1934) 35.

dramatic imagery. Besides praising the traditional virtue of transparency, he devotes a great deal of attention to those figures that have considerable impact on the hearer, such as *apostrophe*, *interrogatio*, *obsecratio* and *exclamatio*. The minister should speak with Christ, interrogate the congregation, plead with them or use emotional exclamations. He should dramatise biblical scenes 'as in a theatre', and provide the subject with striking details and surroundings, to picture them 'as if we paint with living colours, so that the listener [...] seems to behold the event as if placed in its midst'.<sup>18</sup> This emphasis on the relationship between the minister and the congregation also meant that Keckermann devoted book II completely to delivery, providing rules essentially equivalent to the teachings of Quintilian.<sup>19</sup>

Concerning the part played by rhetoric in these theories of preaching, the most striking aspect is that the authors attach different degrees of importance to the various *officia oratoris*. Erasmus and Keckermann considered all aspects (*inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, *actio*) to be of significance for ministers. The texts by Melanchthon and Perkins, on the other hand, tended to minimise the role of elocution and delivery. These differences can be explained, I believe, by scrutinising the general aim (expressed in all these works) of showing sincerity. The need for sincerity takes into account the perceived difference between the motives of orators and those of preachers. All authors agree that the most important difference is that the orator seeks applause and honour, while the preacher wants nothing but to praise God and to edify the congregation. For that reason, it is crucial for the preacher to look sincere and to give evidence of his own faith. Generally speaking, down through the ages, this has been done in one of two ways. One involves trusting in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, while the other follows the rhetorical rules of style and delivery that are focused on showing sincerity. While elements of both methods are usually present, one can conclude that people like Melanchthon (in his homiletic work) and Perkins took the first method as their starting point. Others, such as Erasmus and Keckermann tended to follow the second method.

---

<sup>18</sup> Keckermann, *Rhetoricae ecclesiasticae*, 27, 44. Quoted from Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (note 10) 91.

<sup>19</sup> Van Zuylen, *Keckermann* (note 17) 34–35; Bayley P., *French Pulpit Oratory 1598–1650. A Study in Themes and Styles, with a Descriptive Catalogue of Printed Texts* (Cambridge: 1980) 62–63; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (note 10) 91–92.

Melanchthon and Perkins emphasised the scriptural idea that the Holy Spirit will give preachers both the words to speak, and the power to speak them as they should be spoken (Matth. 10: 19–20). The classical commonplace view is that only an emotionally affected speaker is able to move an audience. Melanchthon and Perkins stated that, in the same way, only preachers whose hearts are inflamed by the Spirit will be able to inflame the hearts of others. Ornament or other devices of expression are considered to hamper this process. They inhibit emotional arousal in both the preacher and the listener, because thinking about how to say something *well*, or noticing how *well* it is said, will give rise to critical detachment. From this point of view it is obviously not necessary to provide copious precepts for style, voice and gestures.

Like Augustine, both Erasmus and Keckermann acknowledge the importance of the influence exerted by the Holy Spirit, which enables preachers to express themselves. They nevertheless maintain that preachers should try to do some of the work themselves. From this point of view, it is clearly useful to give instructions (i.e.: rhetorical rules) on how to proceed. With regard to style and delivery, these authors claim that artificial words or affected gestures are inappropriate for preachers. They focus on precepts from classical rhetoric intended to imitate natural, spontaneous expression. This gives the impression of sincerity when providing lively descriptions, conducting a dialogue, expressing doubt, or pleading.

What emerges clearly from the works of the church fathers is that, while justifying preachers' use of rhetoric, they also stressed the considerable effect of preachers' behaviour while away from the pulpit. They argued that this behaviour could be more persuasive than any amount of verbal eloquence. This idea, which was often put forward by subsequent writers, was particularly emphasised by Perkins and others.

*Dutch authors on preaching theory: from Teellinck to Fabricius*

Although the first Calvinist sermons were heard in the Netherlands in the 1540s, it was not until the second decade of the seventeenth century that Dutch authors began to theorise about the Reformed manner of preaching. Thus, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Dutch ministers were still dependent on treatises by foreign authors. L. Trelcatius Junior (1573–1607), a Leiden professor, took

the lead in 1614 when he produced “*Ecclesiastes sive methodus et ratio formandi sacras conciones*”, thereby becoming the first Dutch author in this field.<sup>20</sup> This was followed by a continuous flow of works by Dutch authors, although those dating from the first half of the seventeenth century were mostly just chapters in more extensive theological studies. Willem Teellinck (1579–1629) e.g. included a chapter entitled “*Vande predicatie van Godts woordt*” (“On the preaching of God’s word”) in his *Noodwendigh vertoogh, aengaende den tegenwoordigen bedroefden staet, van Gods volck [...]* (*Necessary discourse on the current sad state of God’s people [...]*, 1627). Guilielmus Amesius (1576–1633), immigrated from England, dedicated a chapter to the sermon in his theological compendium *Medulla SS theologia* (1628), and another in his work on casuistry, *De conscientia et eius iure, vel casibus* (1630).

The first complete preaching manual by a Dutch Reformed author was published in 1645. This was *Tractatus de ratione concionandi* by Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617–1666). Hoornbeeck’s example was instantly followed by many others, such as Johannes Martinus (1603–1665), *Praxeos populariter concionandi rudimenta* in 1651; Guilielmus Saldenus (1627–1694), *Concionator sacer, sive de concionandi ratione (imprimis practica) artis directiones* in 1677; David Knibbe (1639–1701), *Manuductio ad oratoriam sacram* in 1679; Salomon van Til (1643–1713), *Methodus concionandi, illustrata commentariis et exemplis* in 1688; and Campegius Vitringa (1659–1722), *Animadversiones ad methodum homiliarum ecclesiasticarum rite instituendarum* in 1712. Aside from his inaugural lecture, Fabricius—the first professor in this subject—published another seven ‘*dissertationes theologico-oratoriae*’.<sup>21</sup> Some of the Latin works were also translated, either wholly or in part, into Dutch.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> This was published in his *Opuscula theologica omnia*, pp. 392–428. Hoekstra T., *Gereformeerde homiletiek* (Wageningen: 1950) 116.

<sup>21</sup> His inaugural lecture, which was in fact an adaptation of an earlier oration *De scriba edocto in regno caelorum* (1717), was published as *Orator sacer* (Leiden: 1722). Six years later, a translation by J.H. Jungius appeared, *De heilige redevoerder*, which was reprinted in 1733 together with seven ‘*dissertationes theologico-oratoriae*’. In 1735 Fabricius published some additions to his inaugural lecture, *Bijvoegsels der aantekeningen op den Heiligen redenaar*. His complete works were published as *Opera omnia philologico-theologica, exegetica et oratoria*, 4 parts (Leiden: 1740). See for more bibliographic and biographical information: A. de Groot, *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme*, part 3, 109–110; J.P. de Bie en J. Loosjes, *Biografisch woordenboek van protestantsche godgeleerden in Nederland*, part 3, 2–8.

<sup>22</sup> This concerns the following of the above-mentioned works: both treatises by Amesius were translated into Dutch, in 1656 and 1653 respectively. Summarised extracts from Knibbe’s *Manuductio* were published as “Kort onderwijs van de preek-order”

I will now explore the way in which these works adapted the laws of classical rhetoric, with regard to the considerations set out above. I will discuss which *officia oratoris* were considered most important, the degree of influence thought to be exerted by the Holy Spirit, and what was said about the distinction between the motives of orators and those of ministers. This discussion also addresses the ethos of ministers. Almost every seventeenth century tract stated that ministers should live a pious life, thereby serving as living examples to their congregations. Since there are no distinct differences in the opinions expressed about this topic, I will not explore it further.

The earliest seventeenth century treatises focused on *inventio* and *dispositio*. Although some consideration was given to *elocutio* and *actio*, this was far from common. At the beginning of “Vande predicatie van Godts woordt” (1627), Willem Teellinck noted that three things needed to be considered:

Firstly, the matters that are to be preached; secondly, the way and order in which these matters should be arranged, to be most edifying to the people; thirdly, a minister’s presence and demeanour, which enable him to preach these things forcefully and fruitfully.<sup>23</sup>

The emphasis is on *inventio* (‘matters’) and *dispositio* (‘order’), which take up fifteen of the chapter’s thirty pages.<sup>24</sup> The treatment of *elocutio* (‘way’) is limited to a plea for transparent language, which does not even fill one page.<sup>25</sup> In the following section, Teellinck discussed ‘a minister’s presence and demeanour’. Those who took this announcement to mean that this part would deal with *actio* would have been in for a disappointment. Teellinck gives the subject a much broader treatment. Firstly, he discusses the life of the preacher in general

---

at the end of his *De leere der Gereformeerde kerk*, 1689. Salomon van Til’s treatise was published in 1705 in a translated and shortened version as *Predik-ordre*. Vitringa’s *Animadversiones* were fully translated and published as *Aanmerkingen over de leerwijze om kerkelijke redenwoeringen wel op te stellen*, 1724. Some of Fabricius’ writings were also translated, see note 21.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Eerst, op de materien die te Predicken zijn; Ten tweeden, op de wijze ende ordre hoe die materien te schicken zijn, tot de meeste stichtinge des volcx; Ten derden, hoe de Predicant sich hebben moet, om met cracht en vrucht sulcx te Predicken’. Teellinck W., *Noodwendigh vertoogh, aengaende den tegenwoordigen bedroefden staet, van Gods volck* [...] (Middelburg: 1627) 109.

<sup>24</sup> Teellinck, *Noodwendigh vertoogh* (note 23) 109–117, 132–137.

<sup>25</sup> Teellinck, *Noodwendigh vertoogh* (note 23) 117–118.

before going into the mental preparation for delivering a sermon. He also deals with the things that the preacher needs to do during and after the service. All in all, ten pages are devoted to the mental condition of the preacher. Only five pages (a sixth of the entire chapter) deal with how he should behave during the sermon, in which just a few specific instructions are given about the delivery.<sup>26</sup> Actually, Teellinck's main assertion is that seriousness and sincerity are more important to good delivery than are the laws of rhetoric:

That we try to preach, all that we have to preach, from the heart, with longing and desire, to acquire this that we have now designed, and plan to advise the people, and dissuade them, in preaching. This will make us, with very good, and well suited words, and movements, deliver the things we have to preach: it shall make us aware, that there is nothing in the world, that makes man more eloquent, than the severe seriousness, that one feels, to really acquire, the things that are the reason for speaking [. . .].<sup>27</sup>

In addition to this seriousness, it is of major importance that the sermon be a demonstration of the Holy Spirit. According to Teellinck, one accomplishes this by using scriptural language and reciting in a sedate, stately and spiritual manner, with an ardent zeal to deter from sin and exhort to Christian virtues.<sup>28</sup> Also with regard to preparation, Teellinck stated that the 'movements, and commotions of the Spirit' were necessary. The preacher should nevertheless exert himself to perceive these. Moreover, he should study and eagerly envision the situation in the text and the condition of the congregation.<sup>29</sup>

The influence of William Perkins's *Prophetica*<sup>30</sup> is particularly clear in the importance Teellinck attaches to the 'demonstration of the

---

<sup>26</sup> Teellinck, *Noodwendigh vertoogh* (note 23) 118–127 (mental condition of the preacher); 127–132 (how to behave during the sermon).

<sup>27</sup> 'Dat wy sien te Predicken, al wat wy te Predicken hebben, van herten, met een verlange, ende begeerte, om te vercrijgen, t'gene dat wy nu ontworpen, ende voor hebben, om den volcke aen, ende af te raden, in het Predicken. Dat sal ons doen met seer goede, ende wel passende woorden, ende beweginghen, de saaken die wy te Predicken hebben, uyt-spreken: het sal ons doen gewaer worden, datter ter werelt niet en is, dat de mensche meer wel-sprekende maect, dan den grooten ernst, diemen heeft, om waerlijcke te vercrijgen, 't gheene daerom datmen spreekt [. . .]'. Teellinck, *Noodwendigh vertoogh* (note 23) 128.

<sup>28</sup> Teellinck, *Noodwendigh vertoogh* (note 23) 130.

<sup>29</sup> Teellinck, *Noodwendigh vertoogh* (note 23) 121–126 (preparation on preaching).

<sup>30</sup> In 1606 a Dutch translation was published, *Prophetica, dat is, een heerliick tractaet van de heylige ende eenighe maniere van predicken*, of which eventually three editions were published.

Spirit', as well as in his view of the entire subject. As in Perkins's work, personal religious experience is considered to be the most crucial device for effectively conveying the message of the sermon. Likewise, the rejection of *ornatus*, which Teellinck calls 'flowers, and figures of eloquence' ('bloemkens, ende figuerkens van welspreken-theyt') links him to the English puritan. Teellinck explicitly linked the use of figures to the difference between the motives of the orator and those of the preacher. He took the view that secular orators just want to enchant the audience with beautiful words, whereas ministers want to provide it with firm discernment, that will stand up to all alluring and deceiving temptations of the devil.<sup>31</sup>

The same general ideas can be recognised in the works of Guilielmus Amesius, a pupil of Perkins. He employs the same classification in his chapter on preaching in *Mergh der ghodtghelerdtheidt*, the Dutch translation of his *Medulla SS Theologica* (1656, Latin 1628). He lists a total of seventy rules, half of which deal with *inventio* and *dispositio*, while about one third concerns the preacher and preaching in general. A sixth covers 'ways of behaving', in which aspects of style and delivery are discussed. Like Teellinck's tract, this is a plea for clarity, sincerity and the 'demonstration of the Spirit'. Amesius warns against the excessive use of figures of speech, 'man-made flowers' ('menschelijke bloempjes') that will make the listener's ears itch. Specific precepts are hard to find.<sup>32</sup>

Other preaching manuals that appeared in subsequent years were also primarily concerned with *inventio* and *dispositio*. Some published treatises discussed only the structure of the sermon, such as "Methodus, formandarum concionum rationem tradens" by Antonius Walaeus (1573–1639).<sup>33</sup> Others resembled some sixteenth century predecessors, in that they distinguish between the preparation and the delivery of the sermon. The former is always treated more profoundly than the

<sup>31</sup> Teellinck, *Noodwendigh vertoogh* (note 23) 131–132.

<sup>32</sup> Amesius G., "Van de ghewoone bedienders, en der zelve am in 't preeken", in *Mergh der ghodtghelerdtheidt*, transl. L[odewijk] Meyer (Amsterdam: 1656) 206–217. He lists a total of seventy rules: rule 1–10: Minister, office; 10–19: Preaching in general; 19–43: Explanation; 44–53: Application; 54–67: 'Way of acting' (*elocutio* and *actio*); 68–70: Prayer after the sermon.

<sup>33</sup> This treatise was originally published in Walaeus' *Opera omnia*, 1643. A Dutch translation, "Beleedt om een predikatie te stellen", appeared in 1648 in *Logica practica, ofte oeffening der redenkonst*, edited by A.L. Kok.

latter, as was the case in *Tractatus de ratione concionandi* by Johannes Hoornbeeck (1645). Their failure to provide any rules for style or delivery does not necessarily mean that they rejected these rules. Possibly these rules were assumed to be common knowledge. For example, in his brief treatment of delivery, Hoornbeeck explicitly refers to Quintilian.<sup>34</sup> In his *Rudimenta* (1651), Johannes Martinus confines himself to some short remarks on pronunciation and delivery. He refuses to add anything more, expressing the view that one could learn this sufficiently in the 'rhetorical schools'.<sup>35</sup>

These authors did not often refer to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the concept of the 'demonstration of the Spirit' virtually receded into the background. Nevertheless, the preference for using scriptural language, which is based on this concept, still remains. Very few authors addressed the issue whether the inspiration by the Holy Spirit renders the minister's efforts superfluous. One exception to this rule is Guilielmus Saldenus. In his *Concionator sacer* (1677) he claims that the preacher's study and devotion go together with enlightenment by the Spirit. He therefore insists on a thorough preparation, involving zealous study. He pointedly rejects certain 'renewers' who claim to derive the entire subject matter of their sermon from direct inspiration by the Holy Spirit, and believe that these are the only truly 'spiritual' sermons.<sup>36</sup> Saldenus was probably referring to the so-called 'geestdrijvers' ('fanatics') among the Mennonites, or to the congregation of Quakers, or maybe even to sects such as those led by Jan Knol or Jan Zoet. These were all known to regard communion with the Spirit as the only requirement for inspired preaching. It may have been the presence of these groups that caused the decline of this concept among the ministers of the 'public' church.<sup>37</sup>

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the ideas of Melanchthon and Perkins about the importance of the inspiration of the Spirit and the personal holiness, authority and zeal of the minister can easily

<sup>34</sup> Van Strien, "Aen sommige predikers" (note 13) 148.

<sup>35</sup> 'De quibus plura non addo, cum ea plene & sufficienter praecipiant Rhetoricum Scholae'. Martinus J., *Praxeos populariter concionandi rudimenta* (Groningen: 1657) 224.

<sup>36</sup> End G. van den, *Guiljelmus Saldenus (1627-1694). Een praktisch en irenisch theoloog uit de Nadere Reformatie* (Leiden: 1991) 79.

<sup>37</sup> See for information about these groups and their inspired preaching: Kannegieter J.Z., *Geschiedenis van de vroegere quakersgemeenschap te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam-Haarlem: 1971) 4-5; Frijhoff W. - Spies M., *1650. Bevochten eendracht* (The Hague: 1999) 353.

be recognised in Dutch treatises. These ideas lost their impetus in the middle of the century. However, the change which first became noticeable in these mid-century works by people like Walaeus, Hoornbeeck and Saldenus, did not become really visible until around 1680. By the century's end, the ideas of Melanchthon and Perkins had been largely replaced by those of writers like Erasmus and Keckermann. There was a greater focus on *elocutio* and *actio*, while less emphasis was placed on a minister's personal religious experiences.

In *Manuductio* (1679), David Knibbe gives an exhaustive treatment of *inventio* and *dispositio*. However, he also included a separate, relatively short, chapter on style and delivery.<sup>38</sup> In the first two parts of *Methodus concionandi* (1688) Salomon van Til discusses every aspect of the structure of the sermon. The first part is general in nature, and the second deals with different kinds of texts. But he devotes the third part of his work to style, delivery and memory, and also includes remarks on style and delivery in the first two parts, dealing with the specific sections of the sermon. Although both treatments of style and delivery by Knibbe and Van Til are rather brief in nature, there was, however, a big difference from the way Teellinck or Amesius treated these subjects.<sup>39</sup> Unlike the early works, these few pages give specific precepts. And these precepts are reminiscent of those provided by Erasmus and Keckermann. For instance, Van Til recommends the use of interrogation (*interrogatio*), exclamation (*exclamatio*) and *prosopopoeia* or personification, pointing out the utility of what might be called dramatic or theatrical figures.<sup>40</sup>

In the texts of these authors, the weight of ministers' personal experiences recedes into the background. Van Til only remarked in passing that when one wants to admonish, it is necessary that one speaks with a truly concerned heart and mind, and with evident warmth.<sup>41</sup> These authors would, of course, have considered it no less important for ministers to be sincere than previous ones. But, in

---

<sup>38</sup> 'De actione, ubi de stylo, voce & gestibus'. Knibbe D., *Manuductio ad oratoriam sacram* (Leiden: 1683) 197–213.

<sup>39</sup> Knibbe's treatment of style and delivery takes up fifteen of the book's 213 pages. Van Til's entire work contains 116 pages. In the third part of this work only three pages are devoted to style, and four to delivery. Til S. van, *Preedik-ordre, geschikt naar de leerregelen der uitleg- en redeneerkunde* [...] (Haarlem: 1705) 108–110 (style); 110–113 (delivery).

<sup>40</sup> Van Til, *Preedik-ordre* (note 39) 37, 55, 104.

<sup>41</sup> Van Til, *Preedik-ordre* (note 39) 51.

order to 'move the passions', Van Til preferred to put his trust in 'the regular guidance of the voice and gestures', which is why he provided these rules. These included typical gestures employed by ministers, such as pointing a finger while threatening, or turning the head when speaking about vices.<sup>42</sup>

This increased attention to style and delivery went hand-in-hand with a change in terminology. Ministers were increasingly referred to as *orators*, while sermons became *orations*. Knibbe still referred to ministers as 'teachers', but for the sermon he used the word 'oration' ('reeden-voering'). Although Van Til also used 'preacher' ('prediker') or 'sermon' ('preeke'), he more often used the terms 'orator' ('reeden-voerder', 'reedenaar') and 'oration' ('reedenvoering'). From this it can be concluded that ministers no longer felt so strongly about the distinction between profane and sacred orators. They were still aware of the distinction in motives, with the secular speaker's aim being the pursuit of applause. However, there was a more permissive attitude toward 'delighting' the listener. Van Til thought that ministers should use style in an attempt to be understood 'with some delight'.<sup>43</sup> Campegius Vitringa, a professor in Franeker university, devoted a separate chapter of his *Animadversiones* (1712) to a sharp-witted and unusual choice of words. He believed that such words penetrate the spirit and will be remembered well, for the very reason that they delight.<sup>44</sup>

*Fabricius: the first professor of Sacred Rhetoric*

In view of these changes in attitude, the decision to create a professorship of sacred rhetoric was hardly surprising. By 1722, most preaching manuals had been focusing on all rhetorical *officia oratoris* (although *memoria* is hardly spoken about) for forty years. Nevertheless, in his inaugural lecture, Fabricius deemed it necessary to defend ministers' use of rhetoric. He claimed that theologians who are not trained in rhetoric are hardly worthy of esteem, and can never conduct a sermon properly. Was he defending something that had already

<sup>42</sup> Van Til, *Preedik-ordre* (note 39) 112–113.

<sup>43</sup> Van Til, *Preedik-ordre* (note 39) 108–109 ('met eenig vermaak verstaan te worden').

<sup>44</sup> Vitringa C., *Aanmerkingen over de leerwijze om kerkelijke redenvoeringen wel op te stellen* (Franeker: 1724) 223–242. About the effect: 224, 228, 237–238.

been accepted, or was he addressing matters different from those that concerned his predecessors?

At the beginning of his oration, Fabricius argued that the duties of the sacred orator can be divided in those that are the responsibility of the theologian, and those that are the responsibility of the orator. The former sees to what Fabricius calls the ‘shaping’ of the sermon or the ‘internal eloquence’. This deals with the arrangement of the subject matter and the choice of words (or: *inventio*, *dispositio* and *elocutio*). The ‘performing’ part of the task, or the ‘physical eloquence’, is the responsibility of the orator, involving pronunciation and gestures (*actio*). Although he discussed both tasks, the main emphasis was placed on delivery. The rules he provided were primarily based on classical rhetoric. Most of these can be traced back to Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*, and in fact seem to be a summary of his precepts. Fabricius frequently quoted Quintilian. Furthermore, many passages not shown as quotes were also copied directly from this source, almost literally. One such example is the anecdote about Demosthenes, who—when asked what was the most important thing in oratory—said that delivery came first, second and third, continuing in this vein until the questioner ceased to trouble him.<sup>45</sup>

A couple of years later, in 1728, Fabricius once again addressed the issue of style in *De redeneerkundige-godtgeleerde verhandelingen, aengaende de order in eene heilige redevoering waer te neemen* (*The rhetorical-theological discourses, concerning the order to be observed in a holy oration*). He advocated a transparent style, without excessive ornamentation. Although he did not say so directly, it is clear that he placed great value on lively, dramatic figures such as interrogation (*interrogatio*), painting with words (*hypotyposis*) and addressing absent individuals (*apostrophe*).<sup>46</sup> In contradiction to what the title of the work suggests, he made little mention of *inventio* and *dispositio*. Using various analyses of biblical orations, he simply recommended a structure consisting of an introduction, explanation and application.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Fabricius, *Heilige redevoerder* (note 1) 11–15 (‘shaping’), 16–25 (‘performing’). The anecdote about Demosthenes: Quintilianus, *De opleiding tot redenaar*, transl. and ed. Piet Gerbrandy (Groningen: 2001), XI.3.6; Fabricius, *Heilige redevoerder* (note 1) 19.

<sup>46</sup> Fabricius F., *De redeneerkundige-godtgeleerde verhandelingen* [...] (Leiden: 1728) 23, 25–27.

<sup>47</sup> Fabricius, *Verhandelingen* (note 46) 43. The analyses concern an oration by Christ (Matth. 6:24–7:29), a sermon by Peter about the Pentecost (Acts 2:19–36) and Luke’s description of Stephen’s speech (Acts 7).

The treatises of the first professor of sacred rhetoric thus display relatively little concern for *inventio* and *dispositio*. Given his focus on *elocutio* and *actio*, it almost appeared as if he was attempting to compensate for the scant attention paid to these areas at the start of the seventeenth century. He was particularly interested in delivery, emphasising its importance and providing a wealth of rules. Yet, as the following illustrates, he claimed that it was not his intention to neglect the other areas of rhetoric.

But it is important that you understand this correctly, so that others will not inaccurately interpret my statements to give the impression that, while advocating physical eloquence, I am suggesting that you ignore the internal eloquence. This could not be further from the truth! The latter is the epitome of scholarship and wisdom.<sup>48</sup>

Be that as it may, it is crystal clear that he wanted to put delivery in the spotlight. When he spoke of 'eloquence', he usually meant *delivery*. It was because of his public conversion to the value of delivery that he felt the need to defend the use of rhetoric (or eloquence) by ministers.

As stated above, Fabricius's growing appreciation of the classical rules governing style and delivery was related to declining confidence in the direct influence of the Holy Spirit. The prevailing view at the beginning of the seventeenth century was that ministers, like the prophets and apostles, would receive their eloquence from the Holy Spirit. As far as I am aware, Fabricius was the first Dutch author to argue that this was not in fact the case. He stated that such assistance was only granted to biblical figures, and that contemporary ministers could not count on it. Compared to his predecessors, Fabricius drew an entirely different conclusion from the biblical fact that God granted eloquence to his prophets and apostles, namely that the art of rhetoric is of great value. He therefore urged that great pains be taken to acquire this skill, in order that the congregations might be addressed appropriately.

Since [. . .] it pleased the good God to favour his holy Prophets and Apostles in an extraordinary way with the benefit of eloquence through

---

<sup>48</sup> 'Doch dit moet op een juiste wyze van u begreepen worden; op dat niemant myn zeggen te onvoorzichtigh in dien zin draeië, als of ik wilde, terwyl ik u tot de uiterlyke welsprekenheit aenspoore, dat ge u over de inwendige, die in de geleertheit en wysheit zelve bestaet, niet zoudt bekommeren. 't Is 'er zeer ver vandaan!'. Fabricius, *Heilige redevoerder* (note 1) 63–64.

the Holy Spirit, it evidently follows, that this gift is completely good, sacred and necessary. Further, as such extraordinary inspiration by the Holy Spirit has now ceased, but this office of proclaiming the Word of God to the people in an appropriate way continues to exist, one must therefore attempt to obtain both this very useful gift and the other one [i.e.: what to say, and how to say it] by human diligence, under divine cooperation (*b*).<sup>49</sup>

In footnote (*b*) he referred to Keckermann and Erasmus, providing some quotations from their works. Fabricius's views corresponded with those of Johann Heinrich Alsted, a German contemporary of Keckermann's and a kindred spirit. In *Theologia prophetica* (1622), Alsted argued that, even if the apostles derived their eloquence from the Spirit, modern preachers could not rely on this kind of help. Instead, they must employ the mundane skill of rhetorical art.<sup>50</sup>

Fabricius was also eager to stress the oratorical aspect in the name used to describe preachers. He stated that, while it was common to use terms such as 'concionator, minister, preacher, church orator' ('*concionator, predikant, prediker, kerkredenaer*'), he preferred 'orator'. At the same time, he insisted that the name also be taken to mean a sacred orator, rather than a secular one. As has often been mentioned, this distinction is based on the different motives of such speakers.

[...], I prefer to use instead the honest and dignified title of *Orator*, but with the addition of the word *Sacred*. In this way, nobody will confuse my Orator with the public speakers of the Ancients, or with the enticing boasters or vainly fussing braggarts that abounded in olden times, when paganism was rife.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> 'Want [...] heeft het den goeden Godt behaegt zyn heilige Profeten en Apostelen op een buitengewoone wyze met het voorrecht der welsprekenheit door den H. Geest te begunstigen, 't volgt van zelfs, dat die gave geheel goet, heiligh, en nootzaaklyk is. Al verder; daer derhalve die buiten gewoone ingeeving van den H. Geest ophoudt, en niet te min het zelve amt van Godts woorden op een' betaemyke wyze tot het volk te spreken blyft stant grypen, moet men zich die zeer nuttige gave, zo wel als de andere [i.e.: *wat* te zeggen, maar ook *hoe* te spreken], door menschelyke vlyt, onder de Godlyke medewerking zoeken te verkrygen (*b*)'. Fabricius, *Heilige redevoerder* (note 1) 37.

<sup>50</sup> Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (note 10) 90.

<sup>51</sup> '[...], ik [wil] liever dien eerlyken en defügen tittel van *Orator, Redevoerder*, in haere plaets stellen, doch met byvoeginge van *Heiligen*, op dat niemant mynen Redevoerder met de pleiteren der Ouden, ook niet met eenen verleidenden groot-spreker of wintbrekkenden opsynyder waer van 'er niet weinigen outtyts in 't Heidendom waeren, vermenge'. Fabricius, *Heilige redevoerder* (note 1) 6a.

The main objection to secular orators was still that they were guilty of vain ostentation. However, like Van Til and Vitringa, Fabricius took the view that any endeavour to please the audience should not always be rejected out of hand. He justified his concern with delivery by stating that it can make a sermon much more enjoyable for the congregation.

This is what people want, indeed they crave for such preaching. This is what they mean when they ask ‘*does the Preacher also have any talents?*’, whereas they have little or no interest in erudition. Look at what is happening in the churches. In which of these, I pray you, do you see the larger congregations? Is it those whose preachers are very learned men, but without any agreeability of voice, and without adornment of befitting gestures? Or is it those whose preachers, while not particularly learned, are highly skilled in physical eloquence? Surely, without such (a) eloquence, all sermons, however learned they may be, seem thin and cold to the congregation. Physical eloquence is essential if people are to fully comprehend the theological rules governing daily life.<sup>52</sup>

Fabricius’s point of view can be understood by considering his early teachers, Ludovicus Wolzogen (1633–1690) and Petrus Francius (1645–1705). He waited an extra year before going to university in order to further his studies in eloquence with these teachers. Both individuals, but more especially Francius, had a reputation for raising the issue of physical eloquence. Ludovicus Wolzogen, a Walloon minister, devoted a large part of his *Orator sacer* (1671) to voice, posture and gestures. The eyebrows, neck, forehead and feet were each given a chapter of their own, while the eyes were discussed in three separate chapters. The entire treatment of physical eloquence took up no less than 44 chapters.<sup>53</sup> Petrus Francius, Professor of Rhetoric

---

<sup>52</sup> ‘Hier op zyn de menschen gezet; naer zulk prediken strekt zigh hunne begeerte uit. Hier van hebben ze kennis, vragende; *of de Predikant ook gaven hebbe?* Terwyl ze over de geleertheit als dan niet of zeer weinigh denken. Ziet zelfs de Kerken. In welke, bidde ik u, ziet ge de meeste menschen, in die, daer een zeer geleert man, doch zonder aengenaemheit van stem, en zonder sieraet van welgepaste gebaerden, predikt? Of in die, daer een man, juist zo hooggeleert niet, maer in de uiterlyke welsprekenheit zeer bedreeven, het woort voert? Waerlyk zonder deeze (a) welsprekenheit schynen alle Predikaetsiën, hoe geleert ook, der gemeente mager en kout toe; terwyl de onderwyzende Godtgeleertheit door haer eerst op ’s menschen gemoet waerlyk gewelt doet’. Fabricius, *Heilige redevoerder* (note 1) 63. In footnote (a) he quotes a comparable passage from Erasmus’s *Ecclesiastes* (1535).

<sup>53</sup> Hartog J., *Geschiedenis van de predikkunde in de protestantse kerk van Nederland* (Utrecht: 1887) 147.

at the Amsterdam Athenaeum Illustre, was something of a specialist in physical eloquence, whether in profane oratory or its sacred counterpart. In some of his works, like in *Eloquentiae exterioris specimen alterum* (1697), he provided rules especially for ministers. Francius was convinced that it is eloquence in particular that turns ministers into ecclesiastical orators. In this, he clearly influenced his pupil, Fabricius. They both took the view that one can possess all the theological knowledge in the world, but still be a poor public speaker. Francius made no secret of his criticism of Dutch ministers, stating that they left much to be desired in terms of physical eloquence. He also pointed out that, in the Netherlands, there were very few treatises on pulpit oratory. He mentions just three works, those of Erasmus, Wolzogen and Knibbe.<sup>54</sup> There were, of course, many other contemporary works on this topic. It is hardly surprising that he picked out these authors in particular, since they were among the few who discussed *actio* properly. It appears that Fabricius wanted to correct the omissions pointed out by his teacher, Francius.

### Conclusion

One striking aspect of the history of preaching theory during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is that, aside from some minor nuances, views on *inventio* and *dispositio* remained largely unchanged, while the treatment of *elocutio* and *actio*, and especially the importance that was attached to them, underwent a revolution. The scenario was the same as that reflected in sixteenth century treatises. Increased faith in the direct influence of the Holy Spirit and/or the effect of emotional arousal on the part of the minister reduced the need for precepts (both rhetorical and otherwise) governing style and delivery. As a result, interest in these matters declined. However, the opposite scenario can also occur.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century in particular, it was believed that expression and delivery were fundamentally dependent

---

<sup>54</sup> Heesakkers C.L., "De hoogleraar in de welsprekendheid Petrus Francius (1645–1704)" in *Athenaeum Illustre. Elf studies over de Amsterdamse Illustere School 1632–1877*, ed. E.O.G. Haitzma Mulier a.o. (Amsterdam: 1997) 110–111; Roodenburg H., "Predikanten op de kansel. Een verkenning van hun 'eloquentia corporis'", in *Mensen van de Nieuwe Tijd. Een liber amicorum voor A.Th. van Deursen*, ed. M. Bruggeman – E. Guedeke a.o. (Amsterdam: 1996) 326–327.

on a minister's personal religious experience. Based on a combination of Matth. 10:19–20<sup>55</sup> and the classical rhetorical notion that an individual can only move others if he himself is moved, it was said that a preacher's personal experience of his faith would cause him to say the right words and make the correct gestures, thereby imbuing the hearer with the Spirit. For that reason, virtually no rules at all were provided. Following the good example set by others was thought to be sufficient.

In subsequent writings, *elocutio* and *actio* were treated more explicitly, and practical rules were provided. With regard to *elocutio*, figures of speech that focus on sound or witty wordplay were avoided, because these were associated with affectation and the soliciting of applause. As in the work of Erasmus and Keckermann, these precepts aimed to achieve natural, spontaneous expression, such as exclamation and interrogation, or to display astonishment or doubt, which convey the impression of sincerity. *Actio* was probably given greater attention due to the fact that the above figures of speech are only effective when delivery is properly attuned to them. The rules provided were based on classical rhetoric.

This trend continued in the writings of the first professor of sacred rhetoric, although he restricted himself mainly to physical eloquence or *actio*. He took great pains to emphasise its importance, and his treatment of this subject was far more elaborate than that of preceding authors. It is important to note that his preoccupation with *actio* was so marked that Fabricius stood out from the rest. Subsequent preaching manuals, like *Den Nasireer Gods tot den heiligen dienst toegerust* (*The Nazarite to God, equipped for holy service*, 1731) by Henricus Ravensteyn (1692–1749), went into great detail regarding precepts for the structure of the sermon. In spite of this, the legacy of Fabricius was apparent in Ravensteyn's treatment of *actio*. At one point, he goes as far as to literally reproduce the former's anecdote concerning Demosthenes' statement about the importance of delivery.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Matth. 10:19–20 '[...] do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. At that moment, you will be given what you are to say. For it will not be you who speaks, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.'

<sup>56</sup> Ravensteyn H., *De Nasireer Gods tot den heiligen dienst toegerust*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: 1743) 284–285.

*Selective Bibliography*

- AMESIUS G., *Mergh der ghodtgeheertheit*, transl. L[odewijk] Meyer (Amsterdam: 1656).
- AUGUSTINE, *On Christian Teaching*, ed. R.P.H. Green (Oxford-New York: 1997).
- BAARSEL J.J. VAN, *William Perkins. Eene bijdrage tot de kennis der religieuze ontwikkeling in Engeland ten tijde van Koningin Elisabeth* (The Hague: 1912).
- BAYLEY P., *French Pulpit Oratory 1598–1650. A Study in Themes and Styles, with a Descriptive Catalogue of Printed Texts* (Cambridge: 1980).
- CHRYSOSTOM, *Treatise Concerning the Christian Priesthood*, ed. W.R.W. Stephens (New York: 1889).
- END G. VAN DEN, *Guiljelmus Saldenus (1627–1694). Een praktisch en irenisch theoloog uit de Nadere Reformatie* (Leiden: 1991).
- FABRICIUS F., *De heilige redevoerder van [...] Franciskus Fabricius [...] in eene openbaere Akademierede, als zyn Hoogerwaerdigheit met het Hoogleeraerschap in de H. Redeneerkunde was vereert, op den 8. van Zomermaant 1722. in alle zyne hoedaenigheden voorgesteld; en nu met de aantekeningen en haere vermeerderingen vertaelt [uit het Latyn] door Johan Huibert Jungius* (Leiden: 1728).
- , *De redeneerkundige-godtgeleerde verhandelingen, aengaende de order in eene heilige redevoering waer te neemen [...] en nu uit het Latyn vertaelt door Johannes vander Vorm* (Leiden: 1728).
- HARTOG J., *Geschiedenis van de predikunde in de protestantse kerk van Nederland* (Utrecht: 1887).
- HEESAKKERS C.L., “De hoogleraar in de welsprekendheid Petrus Francius (1645–1704)”, in *Athenaeum Illustr. Elf studies over de Amsterdamse Doorluchtige School 1632–1877*, ed. E.O.G. Haitzma Mulier a.o. (Amsterdam: 1997) 91–134.
- HOEKSTRA T., *Gereformeerde homiletiek* (Wageningen: 1950).
- KLEINHANS R.G., *Erasmus’ Doctrine of Preaching: a Study of Ecclesiastes, sive De Ratione Concionandi* (Ann Arbor: 1969).
- KNIBBE D., *Manuductio ad oratoriam sacram, doctorum praeceptis, exemplis perpetuis, & concionibus quibusdam paradigmaticis concinnata & illustrata [...] (Leiden: 1683).*
- , “Kort onderwijs van de preek-order, om eene predikatie ordentelijk te hooren, en te herhaalen, ten dienste van de leer-gierige en godvrugtige toehoorders van het Woord Gods in de kerk”, in *De leere der Gereformeerde kerk* (Leiden: 1696).
- LADES J., *Milton and the Preaching Arts* (Pittsburgh: 2001).
- MARTINUS J., *Praxeos populariter concionandi rudimenta* (Groningen: 1657).
- MOLHUYSEN P.C., *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, vol. 4 (The Hague: 1920).
- PERKINS W., “The Art of Prophesying”, in *The Work of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Breward (Appleford-Abingdon: 1970) 331–349.
- QUINTILIANUS, *De opleiding tot redenaar*, transl. and ed. Piet Gerbrandy (Groningen: 2001).
- RAVESTEYN H., *De Nasreer Gods tot den heiligen dienst toegerust*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: 1743).
- ROODENBURG H., “Predikanten op de kansel. Een verkenning van hun ‘eloquentia corporis’”, in *Mensen van de Nieuwe Tijd. Een liber amicorum voor A.Th. van Deursen*, ed. M. Bruggeman a.o. (Amsterdam: 1996) 324–338.
- SALDENUS G., *Concionator sacer, sive de concionibus ecclesiasticis, tum concipiendis tum habendis, artis directiones* (The Hague: 1678).
- SCHNELL U., *Die homiletische Theorie Philipp Melanchthons* (Berlin: 1968).
- SHUGER D.K., *Sacred Rhetoric. The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton NJ: 1988).
- STRIEN A. VAN, “Aen sommige Predikers”, in *Constantijn Huygens, Mengelingh* (Amsterdam 1990) 134–167.
- TEELLINCK W., *Noodwendigh vertoogh, aengaende den tegenwoordigen bedroefden staet, van Gods volck: waer-inne getrouwelyck aenghewesen wort; in wat swaricheyt ende vervallighe wy ghe-*

*comen zijn, in wat perijckel wy noch staen, met de noodighe remedien, om ons verderf te verhoeden* (Middelburg: 1627).

TIL S. VAN, *Predik-ordre, geschikt naar de leerregelen der uitleg- en redeneerkunde, ten dienst der leergierige jeugd ontworpen. Uit het Latyn vertaald* (Haarlem: 1705).

VITRINGA C., *Aanmerkingen over de leerwijze om kerkelijke redenvoeringen wel op te stellen* (Franeker: 1724).

WALAEUS A., "Orde om een predikatie te stellen", in *Logica practica, oft oeffening der redenkonst*, ed. A.L. Kok (Amsterdam: 1648).

ZUYLEN W.H. VAN, *Bartholomaeus Keckermann. Sein Leben und Wirken* (Leipzig: 1934).

*This page intentionally left blank*

‘ARDENS MARTYRII DESIDERIUM’:  
ON THE MARTYRDOM OF ANNA MARIA VAN  
SCHURMAN (1607–1678)<sup>1</sup>

Pieta van Beek

I remember that as a child of 11 while I was reading the histories of the blood witnesses [martyrs] and contemplating the example of so many faithful for Christ and so many witnesses of his truth, I was deeply moved and felt such a burning desire for martyrdom that I heartily wished to change my sweet life with such a lovely death.<sup>2</sup>

*Introduction*

The choice the famous and learned Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) made to leave the official Dutch Reformed Church and to join the radical protestant sectarian community of Jean de Labadie in 1669 caused quite an uproar in academic, literary and ecclesiastic circles. Voetius, *rector magnificus* and professor of theology at Utrecht University, who was both her former *praeceptor* in Greek, Hebrew and Semitic languages as well as her close friend, immediately turned against her and that *Amsterdamse Klooster* [‘Amsterdam convent’]. He organised propositions for a public disputation at the university and published them twice, stating, barely masked:

Nobody ought to leave the church simply because some unbelievers are in it. Nobody ought to join a semi-monastic group, which does little but meditate and hold meetings. Everyone ought to avoid the private gatherings of such a group in order to avoid implication in error.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘An ardent desire for martyrdom’, Van Schurman A.M., *Eukleria seu Melioris partis electio* [...], pars I (Altona: 1673) 14.

<sup>2</sup> Van Schurman, *Eukleria* I (note 1) 14.

<sup>3</sup> Saxby T.J., *The Quest for the New Jerusalem: Jean de Labadie and the Labadists (1610–1744)* (Dordrecht: 1987) 177; Voetius G., *Godts-geleerde vragen, en antwoorden wegens de scheidingen, en afwijkingen, van de kerken* (Amsterdam: 1669); Voetius G., “De illicitis separationibus et secessionibus ecclesiasticis” in *Politicae ecclesiasticae* vol. 3 (Amsterdam: 1676) 488–512.

His other writings also confirm that Voetius despised the step his favourite and only female student took. This was not only because she followed a preacher other than himself, and thus left his church—Voetius was sometimes called *Papa Ultrajectinus*, the Pope of Utrecht<sup>4</sup>—but also because she, unmarried, left Utrecht to live with a bachelor. In Voetius' footsteps the whole Voetian party (including the university's Faculty of Theology) condemned her.<sup>5</sup> They could not believe that she followed Jean de Labadie, a *homo pestilentissimus*, a 'Nebulo Nebulorum' as Maresius wrote.<sup>6</sup> Erudites, poets, pastors and politicians wrote of the scandal of such a move in their poems, journals and letters.<sup>7</sup>

That she followed her *driften* (passions) was also the complaint of Rev. Jacobus Koelman, who further argued that when one left the church, one would automatically fall into error. He then described all the errors of the Labadists, which numbered no fewer than 44.<sup>8</sup> The poet Constantijn Huygens wrote a long poem in Latin (and translated it into Dutch as *Sedige en sielroerende aenspraek aen Juffr. Anna Maria van Schuurman, om haer af te trecken van Jan de Labadie*), reprimanding her not only for leaving the academic world that had nurtured her so well, but also for following that French 'cock' De Labadie who only wanted to pour piety into her. The words Huygens uses have strong sexual undertones.<sup>9</sup> That she lived with other men and women in the same building did not make any differences to the accusers. The eighteenth-century satirist Jacob Campo Weyerman commented that she, as an unmarried woman of 60, 'embraced in

<sup>4</sup> Du Moulin quoted in Duker A.C., *Gisbertus Voetius* 4 vols (Leiden: 1989) III, 75; IV, 158.

<sup>5</sup> Saxby, *New Jerusalem* (note 3) 177.

<sup>6</sup> 'A scoundrel of all scoundrels', quoted in Nauta D., *Samuel Maresius* (Amsterdam: 1935) 338.

<sup>7</sup> *Lange ryghweter, waar aan opgezamelt zijn alle de versjes van verscheyde schryvers voor en tegen Jean de Labadie* (Amsterdam: 1676); Schotel G.D.J., *Anna Maria van Schurman* ('s-Hertogenbosch: 1853) 191–198; De Baar M., "'En onder 't hennerot het haantje zoekt te blijven': de betrokkenheid van vrouwen bij het huisgezin van Jean de Labadie (1669–1732)" in *Vrouwenlevens 1500–1800*, *Jaarboek voor vrouwengeschiedenis* 8 (Nijmegen: 1987); Saxby, *New Jerusalem* (note 3) 177; 456–459.

<sup>8</sup> Koelman J., *Historisch verhaal nopens der Labadisten scheuring en veelerley dwalingen, met de wederlegginge derzelver*, second edition (Leeuwarden: 1770).

<sup>9</sup> Huygens C., *Sedige en sielroerende aenspraek aen Juffr. Anna Maria van Schuurman, om haer af te trecken van Jan de Labadie* (Amsterdam: 1670); Huygens C., *Heusche vermaaning, aan [...] Anna Maria van Schurman [...]* (Amsterdam: 1670); Huygens C., *De gedichten van Constantijn Huygens, naar zijn handschrift uitgegeven*, ed. J.A. Worp, vol. 7 (Groningen: 1897) 298–300.

her old age the lascivious feelings of the titfeeler Labadie.<sup>10</sup> Rumours were also spread that she not only followed De Labadie in passion, but even married him secretly, a myth that recently cropped up in Schama's *The Embarrassment of Riches* (1987).<sup>11</sup>

Among the reasons given for her joining the Labadists are her disappointment with the Dutch Reformed Church (which she felt had too many unbelievers), her love for the idea of imitating Christ and the early church of Acts II, as well as the greater freedom and protection for women in this (sectarian) convent-like community.<sup>12</sup> Some state that the deaths of her last closest relatives—the aunts Agnes and Sybilla von Harff (ca. 1660) and her brother Johan Godschalk van Schurman (1664)—resulted in an identity crisis that was only resolved in the group of the Labadists.<sup>13</sup> Many writers insisted that they did not understand what drove Van Schurman and thus declared her *mad*, saying that her mind was darkened by a cloud, causing her to become a fanatic and a zealot, even capable of eating spiders.<sup>14</sup>

In many of Van Schurman's writings her disappointment with the Dutch Reformed Church is clear: her long-time disillusionment can be seen not only in her autobiography *Eukleria* (1673 and 1685), but also in poems and pamphlets written after 1654.<sup>15</sup> One can indeed find in her work the theme of the imitation of Christ, the love for the early church and her fascination with De Labadie (in a spiritual, not a sexual way).<sup>16</sup> That there was more freedom for her as a

<sup>10</sup> Weyerman J. Campo, *De levensbeschrijvingen der Nederlandsche konst-schilders en konst-schilderessen* vol. 2 (The Hague: 1730) 57–62: 'Zy omarmde in haare hooge jaaren de wellustige gevoelens van de Tettentaster Labadie'.

<sup>11</sup> Schama S., *The Embarrassment of Riches* (New York: 1987) 411.

<sup>12</sup> De Baar, "Hennerot" (note 7) 14–15; Irwin J., "Anna Maria van Schurman: From Feminism to Pietism", *Church History* 46 (1977) 48–62; Van der Linde S., "Anna Maria van Schurman en haar *Eukleria*", *Theologia Reformata* 21 (1978) 117–144.

<sup>13</sup> Irwin, "From Feminism to Pietism" (note 12); Becker-Cantarino B., "'Erwählung des bessern Teils': zur Problematik von Selbstbild und Fremdbild in Anna Maria van Schurmans *Eukleria* (1673)" in *Autobiographien von Frauen: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte*, ed. Magdalene Heuser (Tübingen: 1996) 25; Scheenstra E., "On Anna Maria van Schurman's 'right choice'" in *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, eds. M. de Baar a.o. (Dordrecht: 1996) 119.

<sup>14</sup> Schotel, *Schurman* (note 7) 191–198; Korte A.M., *Een gemeenschap waarin te geloven valt* [...] (Nijmegen: 1985).

<sup>15</sup> Van Schurman A.M., *Pensées d' A.M. de Schurman sur la réformation nécessaire à present à l' église de Christ* (Amsterdam: 1669); Van Schurman, *Eukleria* I (note 1); Van Schurman A.M., *Eukleria seu Melioris partis electio* [...] pars II (Amsterdam: 1985); Beek P. van, 'Verbastert christendom': *Nederlandse gedichten van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)* (Houten: 1992) 79–92; 122–131; 144–165.

<sup>16</sup> Van Schurman, *Eukleria* I (note 1); Van Schurman, *Eukleria* II (note 15) passim.

woman in the Labadist community is also clear from her letters and the books she wrote as a leader. Although the Labadists did not have the traditional reformed clerical hierarchy of preacher, elder and deacon, there were only male pastors and mainly speaking brothers. Speaking sisters were far less common and not very prominent.<sup>17</sup> Van Schurman however had a prominent position as ‘mama’: a female leader of the group. She was not allowed to preach, but as an academically schooled and versed theologian and linguist she was the best-known and most knowledgeable defender of the Labadists.<sup>18</sup>

Yet it is still not clear what exactly was the driving force behind her choice. It has occasionally been mentioned that her actions brought her close to martyrdom,<sup>19</sup> as was e.g. done in a footnote of a rare translation of her *Eukleria* in German (1783), but it was only noted in passing and the idea was never pursued further. As late as 1996 the theologian Scheenstra still states: ‘We will never be able to establish with certainty precisely what motivated Van Schurman’s decision to join De Labadie’s community [. . .]; it is virtually certain that her belief was the decisive factor.’<sup>20</sup> In the following discussion I will try to prove that a very strong force behind Van Schurman’s motivation has been her aspiration for and lifelong fascination with martyrdom. I will first give an overview of Christian martyrdom in general and then take a closer look at martyrdom in Van Schurman’s life.

### *Martyrdom*

Martyrdom in general refers to the act of choosing death rather than renouncing one’s religious principles. In a less strict meaning it also refers to the suffering, pain, difficulties experienced when standing by one’s beliefs. If there was no opportunity to die or suffer, an alternative form of spiritual martyrdom was strict asceticism. In this

---

<sup>17</sup> Berkum H. van, *De Labadie en de Labadisten. Eene bladzijde uit de geschiedenis der Nederlandse Hervormde kerk*, 2 vols. (Sneek: 1851); Saxby, *New Jerusalem* (note 3).

<sup>18</sup> Saxby, *New Jerusalem* (note 3).

<sup>19</sup> Van der Linde, “Schurman” (note 12) 117; Van Berkum, *De Labadie* (note 17) I, 187; Van Schurman A.M., *Der Anna Maria von Schurman Eukleria oder Erwählung des besten Theils* (Dessau-Leipzig: 1783) 235.

<sup>20</sup> Scheenstra, “Right choice” (note 13) 119.

chapter I will limit myself to Christian martyrdom, omitting other kinds such as Jewish, Muslim and political martyrs.

Going back to the sources, we see that the word in Greek (μάρτυς) means witness and appears quite often in the New Testament. The central events in human history were, according to western Christianity, Jesus Christ's passion, crucifixion and resurrection, which redeemed humanity and made salvation possible. For generations to come Christ was the epitome of patient suffering of calumny, pain and of a perfect but violent death. He was the martyr saviour, because he had known and overcome afflictions. He could offer comfort, and 'because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.' (Hebr. 2:18–55).<sup>21</sup>

During the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire the word martyr became an honorary title for those who were witnesses for Christ and who sealed their faith with their deaths. In the early Christian church a distinction was made between a martyr and a confessor. The latter was also someone who confessed his or her faith before judges and enemies and who also endured tortures, but who stayed alive. After the reign of Constantine the Great, when persecutions came to an end, the worship of martyrs as heroes of the Christian faith flourished: they became saints and for more than a millennium they were loved and honoured.<sup>22</sup>

Cyprian (210–258), a western church leader, was one of the first to write about the subject of Christian suffering in the absence of active persecution. In the late fourth and early fifth centuries Jerome and Augustine wrote of 'spiritual' martyrdom, which linked self-denial, endurance of suffering and ascetic practices to the martyrs' deaths. Gregory the Great reinforced spiritual martyrdom in the late sixth century and maintained: 'Even though we do not bend our bodily neck to the sword, nevertheless with the spiritual sword we slay in our soul the carnal desires'. He also proclaimed that 'if, with the help of the Lord, we strive to observe the virtue of patience,

---

<sup>21</sup> Tabor J.D., "Martyr, Martryrdom" in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, eds. D.N. Freeman a.o., vol. 4 (New York: 1992) 547–549; Wood D. (ed.), *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, Studies in Church History 30 (Oxford: 1993); especially the introduction to this volume by D. Loades, XV–XVIII and the paper by Stuart G. Hall, 1–21; Gregory B.S., *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge MA: 2001).

<sup>22</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21); Wood, *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (note 21).

even though we live in the peace of the church, nevertheless we bear the palm of martyrdom'. Spiritual martyrdom was open to all Christians and a person who enacted these virtues was considered a martyr 'without iron' because 'he beareth the cross in his thought', and therefore 'he is a martyr secretly in his mind'.<sup>23</sup>

In the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the *Devotio Moderna* blossomed in the Low Countries and the Rhineland. The Christian virtue of patient suffering was central to this movement. The same patience pervades the *Imitation of Christ*, the most influential text associated with the *Devotio Moderna*. The book, written by Thomas à Kempis, survived in more than 800 manuscripts and was printed in more than 120 editions in seven languages between 1470–1520. The *Imitation* glorified the patient endurance of adversity as an example displayed by Christ himself. The martyrs had followed the Lord in bearing the cross, and all Christians were compelled to do the same. 'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account' (Matth. 5:11). Another scripture reads: 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me' (Matth. 10:24). Being a spiritual martyr and enduring affliction was one of the ways in which followers of Christ could demonstrate their allegiance to Christ.<sup>24</sup>

Considering the sparse opportunities to die for Christ in the late medieval church, martyrdom seemed anachronistic, rendered superfluous by christianisation. Nevertheless, attitudes and practices of martyrs and martyrdom (suffering patiently, dying well and cultivating a devotion to Christ's passion) were taken up by holy men and women and by committed heterodox Christians who risked death on account of their beliefs and practices.<sup>25</sup>

Late medieval Christianity was permeated with an abiding awareness of martyrdom, which took the form of a martyrdom that was transmuted into ascetic practices. This awareness was affirmed and reinforced by the example of the saints, many of whom were martyr-saints. The *ars moriendi* (art of dying) focused attention on the moment of death, instructed Christians on how to die properly and shaped

---

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 50.

<sup>24</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 51–52.

<sup>25</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 72–73.

expectations about what a good death looked like. Meanwhile devotion to Christ's passion flourished, encouraging affective identification with a uniquely important martyrdom.<sup>26</sup>

With the advent of the Reformation in the sixteenth century thousands and thousands of martyrs were persecuted and executed (burned, beheaded, drowned, quartered, hung and drawn) for their divergent beliefs. When two Augustinian monks in Brussels were burned in 1523, it signalled the beginning of a wave of persecutions and executions across Western Europe that swept through England, France, the Low Countries, Switzerland, and Germany, and ran into the seventeenth century. Sometimes thousands of contemporaries gathered to witness the public spectacles of execution. 'Sympathizers published pamphlets, wrote poetry, sent letters, sang songs, commissioned paintings, printed prison missives and compiled collections narrating the martyr's words and deeds.' These publications were hugely popular and were reprinted several times throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, being revised and updated regularly.<sup>27</sup>

Early modern Christendom (the mainstream Protestants, Anabaptists and Roman Catholics with all their divisions and subdivisions) agreed on many of the central beliefs within a traditional Christian worldview regarding the origins, purpose, meaning and destiny of mankind. They all regarded the Bible as God's word and as the revelation of His will. They all believed that God determined events on earth through His providence. They believed that after death, the same God who had created them would either welcome them into heaven or damn them to hell. Christians held that human sinfulness had perverted God's created order, but that Jesus Christ, His only son, righted this through his death. Salvation was only possible through Christ and required both faith and action: adherence to God's teaching and following Christ were prerequisites for the possibility of eternal salvation. Ignoring these would lead to certain damnation. These beliefs reflect their views about the world and salvation.<sup>28</sup>

At the same time, within this traditional, shared framework of faith, the content of God's truth was sharply disputed. Christians agreed that the scripture was God's revelation to humanity, but they

<sup>26</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 54, 66, 99.

<sup>27</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 4–5.

<sup>28</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 342–343.

disagreed about its interpretation. Their interpretations were incompatible and they themselves proved willing to suffer and to die for their convictions. 'Christians agreed that all events unfolded according to divine providence. Yet what did these occurrences mean? In the case of executions for religion was God testing his beloved children through affliction that he might exalt them in heaven, or venting his wrath against those who obstinately resisted his truth? The answer was inextricable from one's religious commitment.'<sup>29</sup>

Because the martyrs not only believed, but also enacted their beliefs, all Christians esteemed martyrdom and remembered their respective heroes. All were well aware of their religious rival's contrary beliefs and divergent martyr claims. Martyrs in the Protestant tradition were therefore not recognised in the Roman Catholic tradition, and Roman Catholic martyrs were not honoured in the Protestant church. But in most of their descriptions of martyrs as false or real witnesses they had to admit that even the martyrs of their enemies usually died with a joyful resolve that often impressed onlookers. They stood unshakable in fires that were burning them alive.<sup>30</sup>

Martyrs were willing to die because they believed the biblical words about the blessedness of those who suffer for Christ's sake. They saw their death as a 'rite de passage', from life on earth to eternal life. Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Anabaptists alike shared this in form and content. In all divisions martyrs were encouraged to persevere unto death through personal contact and correspondence with fellow believers. They all understood themselves to be participants in a historical community of the unjustly persecuted, rooted in scripture and exemplified in their saviour's crucifixion. Martyrdom was the highest form of imitation of Christ. It was a magnificent good, despite the transitory grief it evoked. Treatises, martyrologies, letters and poems repeatedly described it as glorious. And if the opportunity to die for the truth did not present itself, then the suffering counted as spiritual martyrdom.<sup>31</sup>

Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven (Matth. 10:28)

<sup>29</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 318–319.

<sup>30</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 344.

<sup>31</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 279.

*Van Schurman's desire for martyrdom*

The fascination of Van Schurman with martyrdom can be explained in terms of experiences in her own life and the lives of her (grand)parents, as well as from the lectures she was attending and the books she was reading and writing. She was, for example, the child of a man who had to flee religious persecution in the Netherlands (Antwerp). Her grandfather Frederik van Schurman, 'homme de qualité et de grands bien', his wife Clara van Lemens and their children fled Antwerp in the same night the protestant martyr Christopher Fabritius was burned at the stake during Alva's reign of terror (1565). They left all their possessions behind and wandered through Germany, staying for a while in Frankfurt, then in Hamburg, but eventually (1593) settled in Cologne, at that time a hospitable city for religious exiles.<sup>32</sup>

Her mother's family also had to flee religious persecution after leaving the Roman Catholic Church and joining the Protestant (Lutheran) party. The Von Harff-family had a narrow escape from the city of Neuss, which was sacked by the Spaniards, and also settled in Cologne. Although they lost almost everything, her grandfather's maxim was told over and over again in the family:

Ce ne sont, que choses perissable que je perds, les meilleures me restent; jamais la flamme ne pourra consumer ni le glaive brûler la parole de Dieu, elle est au dedans du coeur, elle demeure éternellement.<sup>33</sup>

On November 5, 1602, his son, also called Frederik, married *freule* Eva von Harff.<sup>34</sup> The situation in Cologne by then changed so dramatically that when Anna Maria was born (1607) the stakes for non-catholics were burning in the city. She was baptized in a clandestine Calvinist church. Three years later, in 1610, the Van Schurmans had to flee the city too in order to escape a *razzia* on protestants. They lived for some time on a private property in Dreiborn, but later moved to Utrecht where there was freedom of Calvinist belief.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Arnold, G., *Unpartheyische Kirchen- und Ketzerhistori [...]* (Hildesheim: 1976) 1261; Schotel G.D.J., *Anna Maria van Schurman* ('s-Hertogenbosch: 1853) 2.

<sup>33</sup> Arnold, *Ketzerhistori* (note 32) 1261–1262.

<sup>34</sup> Schotel, *Schurman* (note 32) 2–4.

<sup>35</sup> Göebel M., *Geschichte des christlichen Lebens in der rheinisch-westfälischen Evangelischen Kirche*, 3 vols. (Koblenz: 1849–1862) 275–276.

Although they were themselves quite safe now, Van Schurman was often confronted with relatives, friends or acquaintances who had to flee religious persecution, such as her two aunts Sybille and Agnes von Harff from Cologne, who came to stay with her till their deaths. She was also well aware of the clashes between the Remonstrants and the Contra-Remonstrants that shook the Dutch Republic. Although the Eighty Years War and the Thirty Years war came to an end in 1648, other European religious wars continued (in Ireland, France, and England). Her subsequent friends all experienced religious terror: Dorothea Moore (Ireland), Marie du Moulin (France) and Elisabeth von der Pfalz (Germany). When in 1653 Anna Maria van Schurman, her brother Johan Godschalk and her aunts had to visit catholic Cologne and stay there for a while, she experienced again what it meant to be a protestant in a completely catholic environment.<sup>36</sup> The meetings of protestants had to be held in secret and in fear of persecution. A clandestine pastor baptized children and did pastoral work. Even in 1652 the Council of Cologne forbade all non-Roman Catholic gatherings, sermons and services, stipulating severe penalties for disobedience. For her and her family it was not possible to join a secret church. They therefore went to Mülheim, a village on the opposite bank of the Rhine, which did not belong to the diocese. But in winter it was impossible to cross the river. In one of her poems she writes ‘although there are many churches in Cologne, they are all against us, we have to cross the river Rhine in rainy and stormy weather.’<sup>37</sup> At times such as these they had to stay at home and conduct a service there. This was in stark contrast to Utrecht, where they could join a service almost every day in a safe environment without the threat of persecution.<sup>38</sup>

She did not only draw on her own experiences and those of her direct family and friends however, but also drew inspiration from the books she was reading. As a young girl of eleven Van Schurman read, besides the Bible, the Books of the Martyrs, which made an indelible impression on her, causing her to wish for a martyr’s death herself:

---

<sup>36</sup> Van Beek, ‘*Verbastert christendom*’ (note 15); Beek P. van, “‘Een vrouwenrepubliek der Letteren’: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) en haar netwerk van geleerde vrouwen”, *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* 3 (1996) 36–49.

<sup>37</sup> Van Beek, ‘*Verbastert christendom*’ (note 15) 73: Al sijn der kerkcen veel sij sijn ons alle tegen, Wij moeten over rijen door wint door sneu door regen.

<sup>38</sup> Van Beek, ‘*Verbastert christendom*’ (note 15) 66–78.

I remember that as a child of 11 while I was reading the histories of the blood witnesses and contemplating the example of so many faithful for Christ and so many witnesses of his truth, I was deeply moved and felt such a burning desire for martyrdom that I heartily wished to change my sweet life with such a lovely death.<sup>39</sup>

The books she read at that age (1618) could have been reprints of Ludwig Rabus, *Historien der heyligen, auserwöhlten Gottes Zeugen, Bekennern und Martyreren*; or Jean Crespin, *Le livre des martyrs*, or Adriaen Cornelisz. van Haemstede, *De gheschiedenisse ende den doot der vromer martelaren*. In those books not only the martyrs of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century were mentioned, but also the martyrs of the early church such as Polycarpus, Perpetua and Felicitas. As has been mentioned, to die as a martyr was considered to be the most desirable of deaths, at that time like in early christianity. Jesus himself was the preeminent model of the faithful martyr and the willingness to choose death in the face of opposition was presented as the example according to which followers of Jesus should model their own behaviour. It was also often stated that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church, meaning that suffering for one's belief would attract a lot of followers.<sup>40</sup> Van Schurman's *praeceptor* Voetius endorsed this in his classes and writings<sup>41</sup> and maintained that indifference towards martyrdom was unacceptable. She was thus scornful of people who did not hold martyrs in as high an esteem as she did and despised Erasmus for once writing that he neither sought martyrdom nor envied anyone for it.<sup>42</sup>

Her view of martyrdom is evident in a long Latin letter she wrote to professor Spanheim at Leiden University, in which she puts 'Martyres' and 'Confessores' at the same level and quotes Revelation 20: 4, where one learns that the Bible attributes the same victory to martyrs (the beheaded) as to 'such as didn't worship the beast nor his image'. According to her the best thing in life was to strive

---

<sup>39</sup> Van Schurman, *Eukleria* I (note 1) 14: Et, ut unum hoc praeterea speciminis instar hic addam, circa undecimum meae aetatis annum accidisse memini, cum primum in lectionem historiae Martyrum inciderem, ad conspectum exempli tot fidelium Christi fervorum, ejusque veritatis Testium, tam ardens animum meum invasisse martyrii desiderium, ut cum tali gloriosa morte, dulcissimam etiam vitam commutare vehementer exoptarum.

<sup>40</sup> Wood, *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (note 21); Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21).

<sup>41</sup> Niet C.A. de, *Gisbertus Voetius: De praktijk der godzaligheid* 2 vols. (Utrecht: 1996) 457–460.

<sup>42</sup> Schurman A.M. van, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing van het beste deel* (Amsterdam: 1684) 18.

for the martyr's crown and she therefore wrote in one of her poems: 'A christian would not maintain a crown before he had battled.'<sup>43</sup> In her poem *Remarks about the future of the Kingdom of Christ (Bedenckingen over de toekomst van Christi Koninkrijk)* she also wrote about the three crowns a true christian will get: a crown of thorns (the sufferings), a crown of holiness (in heaven and on earth) and a crown of glory (in eternity). One cannot however have one crown without another.<sup>44</sup> Although it was the thorny road to the narrow gate, it was one of the most assured.<sup>45</sup>

In her autobiography she especially mentions the women among the martyrs, such as an unnamed Scottish Lady:

But in these exercises I am confirmed continuously, not only by the examples of the first century Christians (who despised and lost all external things easily, yes even their life for the work of God), but also by the magnanimous deeds of the faithful of our age, especially the example of the generous Scottish Lady who was commanded by judges to give the names of servants of God. But her conscience prohibited it and they tortured her by stretching her shins with a cruel sort of screws. Then she spoke these words, worthy of Christian magnanimity: My Lord, I thank you that you have given me a shin so that I can give it back to you for your case.

So I thanked my God that he had given me, among other things, some sort of fame which I, in embracing his case, could loose and lay aside.<sup>46</sup>

But the woman martyr she most frequently refers to was the learned Lady Jane Grey (1537–1554), who was only sixteen when she died as Queen of England after a reign of ten days. She was beheaded by command of Mary Tudor.<sup>47</sup> In a Latin letter to Rivet, Van Schurman wrote:<sup>48</sup>

An example that I always envisaged was the example of the incomparable queen Jane Grey. No other nation, no other period will provide an equal to her (if I may be so bold).

<sup>43</sup> Beek P. van, "Nederlandse gedichten van Anna Maria van Schurman" in *Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678): een uitzonderlijk geleerde vrouw*, eds. M. de Baar a.o. (Zutphen: 1992) 92.

<sup>44</sup> Van Beek, 'Verbastert christendom' (note 15) 83–85.

<sup>45</sup> Loades in Wood, *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (note 21) XV.

<sup>46</sup> Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42) 248.

<sup>47</sup> Hebrew letter to Dorothea Moore: Schurman A.M. van, *Opuscula Hebraea, Graeca, Latina, Gallica, prosaica & metrica*, third edition (Utrecht: 1652) 154; Latin letter to Rivet ibidem 71–73.

<sup>48</sup> Van Schurman, *Opuscula* (note 47) 71–73.

Ah, swan’s song, not sung in the shadow of a school, but in the last moments of a glorious martyrdom, who will not honour you as an oracle for God’s sake?

The most influential martyr’s story however proved to be the story of Ignatius of Antioch, the famous bishop who had been so eager to embrace death in Rome in 107 A.D. Like Paul and so many martyrs after him, he saw his death as a means of following and joining Christ:

The emperor Trajan likewise commanded the martyrdom of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch. This holy man, when an infant, Christ took in his arms, and showed to his disciples, as one that would be a pattern of humility and innocence: he received the gospel afterwards from St. John, the evangelist, and was exceedingly zealous in his mission and ministry. He boldly vindicated the faith of Christ before the emperor, for which he was cast into prison, and was tormented in a cruel manner. For, after being dreadfully scourged, he was compelled to hold fire in his hands, and at the same time, papers dipped in oil were put to his sides and lighted! His flesh was then torn with hot pincers, and at last he was dispatched by the fury of wild beasts.<sup>49</sup>

When Van Schurman came upon recent editions of Ignatius’ letters in Greek (Voetius had several in his library),<sup>50</sup> she even took her lifelong motto ‘My Love is Crucified’ from these letters. It did not only mean that she offered her love for Christ (in choosing celibacy), but also that following Him, the crucified, was her love.<sup>51</sup> The example of Ignatius must have been in her mind every time she put this motto next to her name in contributions she made in *alba amicorum*—something she did quite often.<sup>52</sup> On several occasions she wrote poems on this maxim, for example this

<sup>49</sup> Milner J. – Cobbin I., *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs* (London: s.a.) 30.

<sup>50</sup> [Voetius G.], *Bibliotheca variorum insignium librorum* [. . .] (Utrecht: 1677) libri in quarto, nr. 259 Ignatii Epistolae Gr. et Lat. cum comment. Vederli advers. Baronium et Bellarminum. Geneva, 1623; nr. 260: Ignatii et Polycarpi Epistolae ex. edit. nitidiss. Usserii. Oxonia, 1644.

<sup>51</sup> Schoedel W.R., *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Philadelphia: 1985); Beek P. van, *Klein werk: de Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)* PhD Dissertation Stellenbosch University (Stellenbosch: 1997) 192, 309–316.

<sup>52</sup> Stighelen K. van der, *Anna Maria van Schurman of ‘Hoe hoog dat een maecht kan in de konsten stijgen’* (Louvain: 1987) 275–277.

*Echo:* In Symbolum suum ó έμος έρως έσταυρωται:

Quis non sollicito Christum veneretur amore?  
 Quem simul Echo omnis conscia clamat. Amat  
 Hic non solus amat qui sanguine pascit amantes;  
 Tartaraque edomuit qui moriens. Oriens.  
 Hunc igitur sapiens castâ pete mente puella,  
 Nitereque hoc Sponso, nec tibi fide. Fide.<sup>53</sup>

During her Utrecht time (1615–1669) her desire for martyrdom was transmuted into asceticism, into a spiritual martyrdom. There was no opportunity to die and struggle for Christ, because in Utrecht she and her family lived in circumstances where there was security for the Calvinist group she belonged to. But the imitation of Christ, so important in Calvinist dogma too, consisted of asceticism, prayer and charity, and these she practiced painstakingly. Her celibacy was part of this life of asceticism. She also started to write a book about the imitation of Christ, a book that would surpass the book by Thomas à Kempis, but she never finished it.<sup>54</sup> The strong desire for martyrdom she experienced as a child arose again every time she met religious refugees, listened to the classes by Voetius about martyrdom or while reading new martyrs' books. These would fuel her passion and would cause it to flare up, and she would again sense the burning desire, like she mentioned in a letter to John Owen, former vice-chancellor of Oxford University, and in her autobiography. When she returned from Cologne she noted and deplored the loss of the spirit of the martyrs in the church.<sup>55</sup> In her youth she had envied the martyrs but now found that their spirit was extinguished in the degenerated Reformed church:<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Van Schurman, *Opuscula* (note 48) 303–304; Beek P. van, “Alpha Virginum” in *Women Writing in Latin*, eds. L. Churchill – P. Brown (New York: 2002) 287–288.

On her life's motto: *my love is crucified*.

Who does not love Christ with an intense love?

This all believers say like an echo. He loves.

He loves us alone whom his blood has fed:

And He conquered Death by dying. He is risen!

Emulate him, wise maid of virginal spirit,

Shine in the faith of this bridegroom—not in faith in yourself.

Have faith!

<sup>54</sup> Van Schurman, *Eukleria* II (note 15).

<sup>55</sup> Latin letter to John Owen in Van Schurman, *Eukleria* II (note 15); Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42) 248, 274; Arnold, *Ketzerhistori* (note 32).

<sup>56</sup> Van Schurman, *Pensées* (note 15); Van Schurman, *Eukleria* I (note 1) 18, 274.

It is so far away that the Spirit of the Martyrs is flourishing now-days. It flourished so much in the days of Cyprian that, when people had to die of the plague, they had to be comforted by him, because they would now miss the crown of martyrdom.<sup>57</sup>

When she met Jean de Labadie she was very likely drawn to him because he was educated in the Roman Catholic tradition with its veneration for saints and martyrs. Because of his religious beliefs inside the Roman Catholic church (he became a Jansenist) and outside it (he became a Calvinist at Geneva) he had to flee for his beliefs several times. When he came to the Netherlands after a life of persecution and hatred, he and his disciples—all unmarried—'vowed to pursue sanctification and self-denial; to shun worldly pleasures and goods; to follow Jesus as poor, despised and persecuted; to bear the cross and to give themselves totally to the ministry of the Gospel, practising it themselves before preaching to others'.<sup>58</sup>

When Van Schurman saw his ascetic lifestyle and the hardships he had to endure, when she heard his sermons and saw that he had started his own little church of true reborn Christians who lived in a community like the pure early church of Acts II, she felt her desire for martyrdom burn like a roaring fire. This was what she had yearned for, and this was the right thing to do precisely because it was what she had always wanted. It presented her with opportunity to suffer for Christ's sake:

So I thanked my God that he had given me, among other things, some sort of fame which I, in embracing his case, could loose and lay aside.<sup>59</sup>

She then felt that she had something to offer: her money, her possessions, her name, fame and her intellectual capacity.<sup>60</sup> *Quisquis vestrum non valedicit omnibus bonis suis non potest esse meus discipulus.*<sup>61</sup> She sold her house and a part of her library and used her money for what she termed 'Pious works' and moved to Amsterdam to join the Labadists.<sup>62</sup> She then realised that she was as happy as when she

<sup>57</sup> Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42) 274.

<sup>58</sup> Saxby, *New Jerusalem* (note 3) 132.

<sup>59</sup> Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42) 248.

<sup>60</sup> Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42) 248.

<sup>61</sup> Luke 14:33: Any of you who does not give up everything he has, he cannot be my disciple.

<sup>62</sup> Greebe H., "Het testament van Anna Maria van Schurman met eenige toelichtingen", *Stemmen voor waarheid en vrede* 15 (1878) 501–514.

had been reading the martyr stories, wishing to become a martyr herself.<sup>63</sup> Just a few days before her death, she wrote again that her choice was not made under the influence of external examples or reasons, but that she was indeed led by the strongest internal emotions (*ductam motibus internis validissimis*). She had heard the voice of God through De Labadie's words and deeds and like Abraham she left her country, her family and friends and went on a journey not knowing where the end would be.<sup>64</sup>

The price she had to pay for her 'right choice' (which is what *Eukleria* means) was to endure a lot of hardship: slander, the loss of friends, the flood of anti-labadist writing, much of it incited by her former friend and master Voetius.<sup>65</sup> She wandered from country to country (Holland-Germany-Denmark-Frisia). She suffered riots in Amsterdam, animosity in Herford (smashed windows and mud-throwing), strong resistance in Altona (the Labadists even had to wait for one month to get permission from the municipality and from the Lutheran and Reformed party to bury De Labadie's corpse!), the experience of almost being shipwrecked and many other trials.<sup>66</sup> It brought her close to martyrdom. She endured it all, in the knowledge of Matthew 5:10: 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' She was persecuted but not executed. She had to sublimate martyrdom into the tranquil acceptance of adversity. In this her fate resembles Margery Kempe, who once dreamed about dying for love of Christ at the

---

<sup>63</sup> Arnold, *Ketzerhistori* (note 32) 1261: A l' âge d' 11. lisant l' Histoire des Martirs elle sentit un desir si ardent de souffrir pour J.C. que, lors qu' elle y a été engagée dans la suite, et a dû enfin luy faire sacrifice de tout pour estre fidele à ce qu' elle sentoit de sa volonté sainte dessus elle, elle l' a fait avec joye, et a senti en son coeur le renouvellement de celle qu' elle avoit alors lors quelle jugeoit qu' elle seroit infiniment heureuse, si un jour elle pouvoit souffrir quelque chose pour son Nom.

<sup>64</sup> Van Schurman, *Eukleria* II (note 15) 180: exemplum Abraham patris credentium, quid ad vocem Domini, relinquebat terram suam, ac consanguineos et amicos, nescius quo locis ipsi terminum suae peregrinationis esset fixurus.

<sup>65</sup> See Saxby, *New Jerusalem* (note 3) 455–459 for the anti-Labadists writings; Van Schurman, *Eukleria* II (note 15) 176: Quando nempe Vir Reverendus et propter vastam ac multifariam ejus eruditionem Celeberrimus D. Gisbertus Voetius, Theologiae Doctor et Professor, Thesis publicis se huic Dei Operi, in ipsius ortu opposuit, et praesertim vero omnis generis et nationis studiosis viam et os aperuit, de nostro instituto audacius loquendi, illud pro cujusque genio exagitandi, atque ejus condemnationem, tanto nimirum Theologo judice, ubique divulgandi.

<sup>66</sup> Schurman A.M. van, *Continuatie van de Eukleria* (Amsterdam: 1754) 75; Van Schurman, *Eukleria* II (note 15) 44–45.

hands of enemies of the Christian faith and who after her musings was told by Christ that what mattered was not actual martyrdom, but the equally meritorious desire for it.<sup>67</sup>

I would not say that striving for martyrdom was the only reason that Van Schurman joined the Labadists, but I think it was the most compelling one. The two volumes of her autobiography confirm just that. The two poems on both title-pages refer not only to her motto, taken from Ignatius of Antioch, ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταυρῶται,<sup>68</sup> but also to the many references to martyr stories.<sup>69</sup> When she died in 1678, this poem that expressed her love of the Cross, was printed below her self-portrait:

See here the Noble Maid, called matchless  
Ere she chose the better part above the world's Praise  
She was as if composed of Wisdom, Spirit and Virtue,  
Her love was crucified, the Cross was her joy  
Art, Languages, Science: Learning, Fame and Honour  
Rejoicing she laid them all at Christ's feet.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (note 21) 50.

<sup>68</sup> Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42); Van Schurman, *Eucleria II* (note 15).

<sup>69</sup> Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42) 18, 49, 50, 52–54, 88, 248, 274, 290.

<sup>70</sup> Translation in Baar M. de a.o. (eds.), *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)* (Dordrecht: 1996) 174, slightly altered by me. The original is printed on the frontispiece of Van Schurman, *Eucleria of Uitkiezing* (note 42):

Siet hier de Eedle Maegt, genaemt weergadeloos,  
Eer sy voor 'sWerelts lof het beste deel verkoos.  
Sy was als saemgesteld van Wyshey, Geest en Deugd,  
Haer Liefde was gekruyst, het Kruys was hare vreugd,  
Kunst, Talen, Wetenschap: Geleertheyt, Groottheyt, Eer,  
Met blytschap ley sy t' al voor Christi voeten neer.

*Selective Bibliography**Primary Sources*

- SCHURMAN A.M. VAN, *Opuscula Hebraea, Graeca, Latina, Gallica, prosaica & metrica*, third edition (Utrecht: 1652).
- , *Pensées d' A. M. de Schurman sur la réformation nécessaire à présent à l' église de Christ* (Amsterdam: 1669).
- , *Eukleria seu Melioris partis electio. Tractatus brevem vitae ejus delineationem exhibens, pars I* (Altona: 1673).
- , *Lof-sangen ter eeren Gods, tot heerlijkheid van Jesus Christus en tot vertroostinge en vreugde van sijn kerk. Uit het Frans vertaalt* (Amsterdam: 1675).
- , *Eucleria of Uitkiezing van het beste deel*, ed. S. van der Linde (Franeker: 1978) Facsimile of the edition (Amsterdam: 1684).
- , *Eukleria seu Melioris partis electio. Tractatus brevem vitae ejus delineationem exhibens, pars II Historiam vitae ejus usque ad mortem persequens* (Amsterdam: 1685).
- , *Continuatie van de Eucleria* (Amsterdam: 1754) Selection from part II.
- , *Der Anna Maria von Schurman Eukleria oder Erwählung des besten Theils* (Dessau-Leipzig: 1783) Selection from parts I and II.

*Secondary Literature*

- ARNOLD G., *Unpartheyische Kirchen- und Ketzerhistori vom Anfang des Neuen Testaments bis auf das Jahr Christi 1688* (Hildesheim: 1967) Facsimile of the edition (Frankfurt am Main: 1729).
- BAAR M. DE, “‘En onder ’t hennerot het haantje zoekt te blijven’: de betrokkenheid van vrouwen bij het huisgezin van Jean de Labadie (1669–1732)” in *Vrouwenlevens 1500–1800, Jaarboek voor vrouwengeschiedenis* 8 (Nijmegen: 1987) 11–43.
- , “‘Now for the faint rumours of fame attached to my name’: the *Eukleria* as autobiography” in *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, eds. M. de Baar a.o. (Dordrecht: 1996) 87–102.
- a.o. (eds.), *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)* (Dordrecht: 1996) Originally published in Dutch as *Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678): een uitzonderlijk geleerde vrouw* (Zutphen: 1992).
- BECKER-CANTARINO B., “‘Erwählung des bessern Theils’: zur Problematik von Selbstbild und Fremdbild in Anna Maria van Schurmans *Eukleria* (1673)” in *Autobiographien von Frauen: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte*, ed. Magdalene Heuser (Tübingen: 1996) 24–28.
- BEEK P. VAN, “‘Verbastert christendom’: *Nederlandse gedichten van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)* (Houten: 1992).
- , “Nederlandse gedichten van Anna Maria van Schurman” in *Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678): een uitzonderlijk geleerde vrouw*, ed. M. de Baar a.o. (Zutphen: 1992) 75–92.
- , “‘Een vrouwenrepubliek der Letteren’: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) en haar netwerk van geleerde vrouwen”, *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* 3 (1996) 36–49.
- , *Klein werk: de Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)* PhD Dissertation Stellenbosch University, 2 vols. (Stellenbosch: 1997).
- , “‘Het Babel van haar tijd’: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) en haar kennis van Oosterse talen”, *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* 6 (1999) 97–119.
- , “Alpha virginum”, in *Women Writing in Latin*, ed. L. Churchill – P. Brown (New York: 2002) 271–293.
- BERKUM H. VAN, *De Labadie en de Labadisten. Eene bladzijde uit de geschiedenis der Nederlandse Hervormde kerk*, 2 vols. (Sneek: 1851).

- DUKER A.C., *Gisbertus Voetius*, 4 vols. (Leiden: 1989) Reprint of the 1897–1915 edition.
- GOEBEL M., *Geschichte des christlichen Lebens in der rheinisch-westfälischen Evangelischen Kirche*, 3 vols (Koblenz: 1849–1862).
- GREEBE H., "Het testament van Anna Maria van Schurman met eenige toelichtingen", *Stemmen voor waarheid en vrede* 15 (1878) 501–514.
- GREGORY B.S., *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge MA: 2001).
- HALL STUART G., *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, ed. D. Wood, *Studies in Church History* 30. (Oxford: 1993) 1–21.
- HUYGENS C., *Sedige en siebroerende aenspraecke aen Juffr. Anna Maria van Schuurman, om haer af te trecken van Jan de Labadie* (Amsterdam: 1670).
- , *Heusche vermaning, aan de doorlugtige en wel-edele juffr. Anna Maria van Schurman, om haar selven te kennen, en af te wijken van Jean de Labadie. Uyt het Latijn [. . .] vertaalt* (Amsterdam: 1670).
- , *De gedichten van Constantijn Huygens, naar zijn handschrift uitgegeven*, ed. J.A. Worp, vol. 2, 1661–1671 (Groningen: 1897).
- IRWIN J., "Anna Maria van Schurman: From Feminism to Pietism" *Church History* 46 (1977) 48–62.
- KOELMAN J., *Historisch verhaal nopens der Labadisten scheuring en veelerley dwalingen, met de wederlegginge derzelver*, second edition (Leeuwarden: 1770).
- KORTE A.M., *Een gemeenschap waarin te geloven valt: over de spirituele en politieke dimensie van het geloof van vrouwen aan de hand van de 'ommekeer' van Anna Maria van Schurman en Mary Daly*, unpublished MA-thesis Faculty of Divinity, Catholic University Nijmegen (Nijmegen: 1985).
- Lange ryghweter, waar aan opgezamelt zijn alle de versjes van verscheyde schrijvers voor en tegen Jean de Labadie* (Amsterdam: 1676).
- LINDE S. VAN DER, "Anna Maria van Schurman en haar *Eucleria*", *Theologia Reformata* 21 (1978) 117–144.
- LOADES D., "Introduction", in *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, ed. D. Wood, *Studies in Church History* 30 (Oxford: 1993) XV–XVIII.
- MILNER J. – COBBIN I., *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (London: s.a.).
- NAUTA D., *Samuel Maresius* (Amsterdam: 1935).
- NIET C.A. DE, *Gisbertus Voetius: De praktijk der godzaligheid* 2 vols. (Utrecht: 1996).
- SAXBY T.J., *The Quest for the New Jerusalem: Jean de Labadie and the Labadists (1610–1744)* (Dordrecht: 1987).
- SCHAMA S., *The Embarrassment of Riches* (New York: 1987).
- SCHEENSTRA E., "On Anna Maria van Schurman's 'right choice'" in *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, eds. M. de Baar a.o. (Dordrecht: 1996) 117–129.
- SCHOEDEL W.R., *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Philadelphia: 1985).
- SCHOTEL G.D.J., *Anna Maria van Schurman* ('s-Hertogenbosch: 1853).
- STIGHELEN K. van der, *Anna Maria van Schurman of 'Hoe hooge dat een maeght kan in de konsten stijgen'* (Louvain: 1987).
- TABOR J.D., "Martyr, Martyrdom" in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, eds. D.N. Freedman a.o., vol. 4 (New York: 1992) 574–579.
- VOETIUS G., *Godts-geleerde vragen, en antwoorden wegens de scheidingen, en afwijkingen, van de kerken* (Amsterdam: 1669).
- , "De illicitis separationibus et secessionibus ecclesiasticis" in *Politicae ecclesiasticae* vol. 3 (Amsterdam: 1676) 488–512.
- [VOETIUS G.], *Bibliotheca variorum insignium librorum theologicorum et miscellaneorum reverendi et celeberrimi Viri D. Gisberti Voetii Pars Prior* (Utrecht: 1677).
- WOOD D. (ed.), *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, *Studies in Church History* 30 (Oxford, 1993).

*This page intentionally left blank*

CORNELIS VAN BYNKERSHOEK AND RELIGION.  
REFLEXIONS OF A CRITICAL MIND IN THE HAGUE  
IN 1699 AND HIS REACTIONS TO CROSSROADS OF  
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS\*

J.J.V.M. de Vet

‘Supreme interpreter of Themis’s holy book’ and ‘Oracle of the Court’ were some of the honorary titles with which the world adorned the tomb of a famous jurist in 1743, a man who left posterity an impressive legal oeuvre and who would live on in memory as an impartial and clear-sighted arbiter in points at issue.<sup>1</sup> The deceased was Cornelis van Bynkershoek (Middelburg 29 May 1673—The Hague 16 April 1743), who at the time of his death, was president of the illustrious Supreme Court of Holland, Zeeland and West-Frisia.<sup>2</sup> The fact that several of his writings were reprinted over the centuries and, for instance, his *Dissertatio de Dominio Maris*, first published in 1703, appeared in a new edition in 1995 affirms Van Bynkershoek’s importance as a jurist and clarifies that the words of praise, written at his death, were fully deserved. During his lifetime he saw some of his works, originally published in Latin, translated into French and Dutch and in later times his ideas would be circulated worldwide in English. Van Bynkershoek published on Roman, national and international law. For the latter his influence in the world is held to be equal to that of Grotius.<sup>3</sup> For forty years Van Bynkershoek made notes of his legal practice as a member of the Supreme Court. These *Observationes tumultuariae*, as he called them, have been kept and give us a unique picture of what happened in

---

\* Translated from the Dutch by R.J. de Vet – van Leeuwen.

<sup>1</sup> Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek: zijn leven en zijne geschriften* (diss. Leiden University: 1869) 441.

<sup>2</sup> See for Van Bynkershoek’s biography, Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) and Kuyk J. van, in: *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, I (Leiden: 1911) 533–536.

<sup>3</sup> Akashi K., *Cornelius van Bynkershoek: His Contribution to the Development of International Law*, (diss. University of Utrecht 1996) 11–17, 191.

the Chambers and reveal his acute judgement on many issues.<sup>4</sup> Among other things they contain cases in which ecclesiastical relations and religious disputes played a part.<sup>5</sup> But Van Bynkershoek also left a small work in which he wrote about churches, religion and ideological ideas in a completely different way, not as a judge, but as a journalist. It is a unique document, different from the rest of his work, but nevertheless showing on every page the insight and the way of thinking of a lawyer. This work, the only one that Van Bynkershoek edited totally in Dutch—apart from quotations—is the subject of this essay. We will examine what he had to say about religion in the widest sense.

Apparently this concerns critical reflexions laid down by Van Bynkershoek in—sometimes rather provocative—satirical prose. They offer the modern reader an interesting view of some crossroads of religious beliefs at the time of the early Enlightenment. Crossroads? Indeed, but in a certain way. Before our eyes a picture unfolds of separating roads over which Christians disperse under a growing alienation and irritation. A scene of ecclesiastical desintegration, stronger in the United Provinces than anywhere else, which necessitated the existing tolerance to be maintained or even enhanced. This ecclesiastical fragmentation shown by Van Bynkershoek implies by its satirical approach an admonition to mutual tolerance. This sort of tolerance, which has been a moral and intellectual export product of the Low Countries in the course of time, should be estimated as of great value. Van Bynkershoek pleaded for this tolerance, yet he found it hard when he was confronted with Quakers or when Pietist tendencies appeared, when the clergy of whatever church claimed supremacy or when international Catholicism manifested itself. He had personally observed these phenomena in the Republic, an outstanding area of crossroads of religious beliefs, or of which he had been informed by newspapers appearing in the Republic. In such cases his love of freedom and unadorned religion forced satirical sentences out of his pen in which a certain scepticism and libertinism resound.

---

<sup>4</sup> Manuscripts edited by E.M. Meijers, A.S. de Blécourt and H.D.J. Bodenstein in four volumes (Haarlem: 1926–1962).

<sup>5</sup> See for instance the summaries by Blécourt A.S. de, in *Die Haghe* (1921–1922) 199, 203 and (1923) 85.

Living in a country where religious—mostly Christian—movements met, a crossroads of religious beliefs with both the possibilities of mutual spiritual improvement and of denunciation and claims to authority, he evidently used his satire to plea for moderation and tolerance.

*A short-lived satirical periodical and its spiritual father*

The periodical we will discuss was published in thirty issues in The Hague between 25 May and 4 September 1699 and appeared twice a week as the *Nieuwe Oprechte Haegse Mercur* (New Sincere Mercury of The Hague).<sup>6</sup> The brief period of publication—was this paper a flop?—and the publicity terms ‘new’ and ‘sincere’ immediately demand an explanation. ‘Haegse’ does not, because there is a picture of the well-known long-legged bird on every issue of the original edition, referring to the coat-of-arms of The Hague. ‘Oyevaertjes’ (little storks) the leaflets were called. The fact that the *Mercur* did not last much longer than three months was not due to a lack of interest of the public. The periodical was hit by a ban of publication by the government, owing to a series of liberal pronouncements on religion and the clergy which Van Bynkershoek had permitted himself. The prohibition provoked an interesting reaction from the author, which we shall discuss later. Van Bynkershoek called his periodical ‘new’; this implies that there must have been a predecessor, in fact the *Haegse Mercurius*, which appeared for the first time on 7 August 1697 and expired on 9 September 1699, only a few days after the publication of the ‘new’ one. The author was Hendrik Doedijns,<sup>7</sup> an erudite man and a lawyer, like his fellow author and competitor. Evidently

---

<sup>6</sup> The periodical was published in-quarto on Monday and Friday, anonymously, and was printed by Gillis van Limburg, printer of the Papestraat. Cfr. Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 449. In the following Van Bynkershoek’s paper is called *Mercur*. Quotations are translated into English and printed between inverted commas. Numbers or pages of the periodical are given between brackets, as well as the page(s) quoted or paraphrased. See for the second edition used for this essay note 11.

<sup>7</sup> See on Hendrik Doedijns (ca 1659–1700) and his *Haegse Mercurius* Buijnsters P.J., *Nederlandse literatuur van de achttiende eeuw* (Utrecht: 1984), 47–57 and Vliet R. van, *Hendrik Doedijns. De Haegse Mercurius 7 augustus 1697–1 februari 1698* (Leiden: 1996), an annotated edition of the period of publication mentioned in this title with a detailed introduction.

Van Bynkershoek tried to push Doedijns off the market: the very word 'new' in the title shows it. For the publisher Gillis van Limburg of The Hague this meant a changing of the guard.<sup>8</sup>

The first edition of Van Bynkershoek's *Mercurius*, of which Star Numan describes a complete collection,<sup>9</sup> is now rare. Did the author buy up and destroy issues once he had become a prominent figure? Not only had he become a member and later the president of the High Court and principal landholder of the District Water Board of Delfland, but he was also elected in the ecclesiastical function of deacon. As such he was a vulnerable man. The suggestion is credible, but there is no proof for it. Moreover, he denied later that he would ever have written anything improper.<sup>10</sup> If Van Bynkershoek had really wanted to eliminate his brainchild, he failed. Within two years after his death his *Mercur* was reprinted and provided with a lengthy index indicating the 'most important cases' which the periodical had in store for a new generation of readers.<sup>11</sup>

When the first issue of his *Mercur* came off the press Van Bynkershoek was twenty-five years old: too old for a youthful lapse in the literal sense, whatever he may have thought about his paper in later times. He had become successful as a lawyer in The Hague, after he had taken his doctoral degree at Franeker university in May 1694. His thesis was praised in learned periodicals, for instance in Pieter

---

<sup>8</sup> Until 2 May 1699 he had published Doedijns' periodical that moved to Amsterdam and from 25 May onwards Van Bynkershoek's paper was published by his house.

<sup>9</sup> Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 449: this copy was found in the Municipal Museum of The Hague, in 1867 still established in the town hall. Star Numan saw the edition in-quarto, see note 6. The Municipal Archives of The Hague possess a copy with the shelfmark 7100 Hgst 1258 and another copy which has recently been recovered and has not yet been provided with a shelfmark. The issues have four pages each. At the top of the front page there is a flying Mercurius with a caduceus carrying a stork with in its beak a prey. At the bottom of the last page of every issue it says that the periodical is printed 'for the author' by Gillis van Limburg, is sold by him and 'also by the booksellers in all the towns'.

<sup>10</sup> Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 63 note 1: 'Oratione usus sum, quam potui, casta, si offenderis, fungus es'. That the *Mercur* was not found in Van Bynkershoek's library, as is stated l.c., is not to the point: it is an item that does not belong to this valuable collection of juridica.

<sup>11</sup> *Nieuwe Oprechte Haagse Mercur, Compleet. Behelsende Satyrique, Politique en Academische Reflexien. Door Mr. C.V.B. Tweede Druk. t'Utrecht, By Arnoldus Lobedianus, Boekverkooper. 1745: [4] en 223 pp. in-octavo.* The edition, which is not rare, was used for this essay. Apart from differences in spelling this second edition is equal to the first one. Already earlier, in 1735, Doedijns' *Haegse Mercurius* was reprinted.

Rabus' *De Boekzaal van Europe* in which Van Bynkershoek was presented to the public as an independent researcher of Roman law who did not let himself be kept on the leash of 'old explainers, gloss makers or schoolmen'.<sup>12</sup> For our observations it is of importance to know that he had first studied theology. He had been fascinated at the time by the Carthesianizing professor Herman Alexander Roëll, who wanted to separate *ratio* and *revelatio* and in consequence rejected the 'eternal generation' of the Logos, the position of the Son in the dogma of the Trinity as a contradiction. After publicly supporting this unorthodox view as a student, Van Bynkershoek soon realized that he would probably never obtain a position as a minister in the Reformed Church and he switched to the Law Faculty.<sup>13</sup> At an advanced age Van Bynkershoek filled two folios with liberal bible comments, but he burned his manuscript shortly before his death.<sup>14</sup> Star Numan, Van Bynkershoek's biographer who was very much after pleading 'the piety of his disposition', praised this deed as prudent and pious. In addition to his admiration for Roëll, Van Bynkershoek's critical interest in the Bible supports the idea that he was a man with a rationalistic attitude, which did not allow him to be shut in within the boundaries of a very strict orthodoxy. On the cross-roads of religious beliefs he preached moderation.

This is evident in his *Mercur*, as we will see. Did Van Bynkershoek need a playground where his pen could move more freely than it was allowed to in legal advice or 'Observationes' according to Roman law? Why did he, a prospective lawyer with a promising career, start such a leaflet? What sort of periodical was *Mercur*? Van Bynkershoek did not need it to make a living, although a little extra income may have been welcome to him as a starter. At the same time, however, he published works on legal subjects, soon went for learned polemics and never made another attempt at a publication that can be compared to his *Mercur*. Unlike his legal works this paper appeared anonymously. Thus it gives the impression of entertainment which the diligent lawyer permitted himself alongside his more serious occupations, making it easier for himself by choosing the same formula

<sup>12</sup> Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 40–49; Rabus P., *De Boekzaal van Europe* (Rotterdam: January-February 1698) 145.

<sup>13</sup> Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 32–35; Thijssen-Schoute C.L., *Nederlands cartesianisme* (Amsterdam: 1954), 529.

<sup>14</sup> Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 38; see also note 3, *ibid.*

as Doedijns had done. This implies that he commented on news items that had recently been published in newspapers with 'Reflexien' (pithy comments), a term also found on the title pages of the bound volumes of both periodicals. The passages in the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant*, for instance, which these brief notes refer to, can easily be found.<sup>15</sup> Sometimes Van Bynkershoek copied a news item which had amused him without any significant comment, simply to entertain his readers.<sup>16</sup> Entertainment was no doubt another purpose of the author.

His public expected that Van Bynkershoek would supply them with witty comments, a wish he was ready to comply with on condition that he did not have to write more 'fun' than he saw fit (p. 53). Characteristic for the sort of jocularly Van Bynkershoek used were the so-called 'loci communes', quotations of influential authors like ancient men of letters and jurists, a technique that was also used by Doedijns and many other authors (p. 146). Comments on topics and the moralistic message that was often added became more amusing through this sort of invention—for these were dicta inventively applied—but also more readily accepted. Confronted with ideas that were recognized as classical as well as valid, the comments on topics lost something of the transience which is typical for everyday life. This transformation did not impede that topical items, 'nouvelles' brought in by the god Mercury (p. 193), remained the core of the periodical's activities. Its name warranted this. However, the name of the classical deity as its title was not all, for 'Mercurius' and varieties of this name were linked to many quite different periodicals, as has recently been explained once more by Rietje van Vliet.<sup>17</sup> In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries more than forty of them

---

<sup>15</sup> In the issues 1 and 3 of his *Mercur* Van Bynkershoek deals with the ban on a work by Fénelon, mentioned in the *Haerlemse Courant* of, for instance, 23 May 1699 (no. 21). *Mercur* no. 2 takes up news items on attempts of the dethroned English king James II to acquire financial support of the Pope, which the *Haerlemse Courant* reported regularly on, for instance on 16 May 1699 (no. 20). The impending collision between the armed guards of a cardinal and those of an ambassador in Rome discussed in *Mercur* no. 10, can be found back in the newspaper of Haarlem of 27 June 1699 (no. 26).

<sup>16</sup> For instance, in no. 12 an item on a traveller who had arrived at an inn that appeared to be a robbers' den, where he was served dishes full of daggers from which he could order the weapon he preferred to be killed with. The passage begins with: 'Engelse Brieven [news items from English correspondents] report...'. The same item occurs in the *Haerlemse Courant* of 25 June 1699 (no. 26).

<sup>17</sup> Vliet R. van, *Hendrik Doedijns* (note 7) 9–11 ('Inleiding') and passim.

were edited in French, and a number of them were published in the Republic.<sup>18</sup> The main types were magazines that informed an elegant public on royalty, society, opera, theatre; further there were dull news bulletins summarizing the issues of newspapers over several months, and thirdly satirical periodicals. We may consider Van Bynkershoek's periodical as belonging to this last category.

The subtitle of the bound edition promises the reader 'Satirical, Political and Academical Reflections', three categories that are difficult to combine on the same wavelength. After all, it is possible to speak satirically about political and academic issues, or academically about satire, but to speak politically about satire is something else, if possible at all. Doedijns treated his readers to far more sorts of 'Reflections', if his title page did not lie, at least. Both authors wrote for their public on a variety of topics, among them items on churches, i.e. Christianity that had fallen apart into numerous denominations, and on all sorts of utterances concerning faith, piety and philosophy. We will see later how Van Bynkershoek looked upon this religious landscape. Of course his judgements revealed something of his own mentality and it is important to register this 'something'. In order not to stumble over gross errors, we must detect what glasses he looked through when playing the part of Mercury. The result of this investigation should also be the description of the mentality of a very intelligent man considering his world at the time of the first phase of the Enlightenment in the Northern Netherlands.

*Mercury's way of observing and expressing himself, his position as a competitor, and his reaction to his banishment*

How Van Bynkershoek observed and criticized the topics of his day, including those of churches and religion, can be understood by looking over his shoulder, watching carefully the techniques he chose to phrase his impressions and judgements. We have already noticed the Latin quotations; occasionally he would also ironically drop in a word in Greek or Hebrew. Of course this is a hint to the sort of public that Van Bynkershoek wrote for: the well-educated circles. We further find that he was certainly not averse to spicy anecdotes,

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. Sgard J. (ed.), *Dictionnaire des Journaux 1600-1789* (Paris/Oxford: 1991), nrs 911-954 e.a.

which his nineteenth century biographer Star Numan considered disgusting.<sup>19</sup> There are also certain tricks which Van Bynkershoek applied regularly, such as stressing nonsensical aspects or glossing over absolutely wrong things with such an overdose of lenience that his readers would disapprove of them even more than they would have done normally. Now and then Van Bynkershoek resorted to a burlesque use of words; he did not recoil from presenting the host of Olympic Gods as 'the complete horde of Heaven' (p. 193).<sup>20</sup>

However, such observations hardly characterize Van Bynkershoek's satirical practice. In order to get a more complete picture we will first investigate his journalistic intentions with the maiden trip of his periodical. This is stated in the first three pages of number 1 of the *Mercur*, which are written as a sort of preface. Next, we will focus on the author's attempts to develop into a recognizable character for his readers by means of statements about himself, although he remains a paper figure enclosed within the world of the magazine. Third, we will ponder the item 'To the Mercurial Reader' in which Van Bynkershoek reacted to the downfall of his periodical and took leave of his public.<sup>21</sup> The last step is an inspection of a text in verse entitled 'Explanation of the etched frontispiece' in the second edition from forty-five years later, in which Van Bynkershoek's intentions are interpreted and the public is recommended to read the periodical.

Van Bynkershoek began his preface with a disqualification of the title held by Doedijns, his predecessor and competitor. What was this man up to writing a *Mercurius* of The Hague, now that he had left for Amsterdam? His items were a mixed assortment of The Hague and Amsterdam, while Van Bynkershoek would bring the public again the real thing of The Hague. The newcomer sounded light-hearted about this task, turning Juvenal's 'difficile est satyram non scribere' into 'there is nothing as easy as making mercuriuses.'<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. Dekker R., *Lachen in de Gouden Eeuw. Een geschiedenis van de Nederlandse humor* (Amsterdam: 1997).

<sup>20</sup> See on the burlesque habit of indicating lofty affairs with 'low' idioms Bar F., *Le Genre Burlesque en France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Etude de Style* (Paris: 1960), chapter II, and Schröder P.H., *Parodieën in de Nederlandse letterkunde* (Haarlem: 1932), 67–74.

<sup>21</sup> At the beginning of the bound volumes of the periodical's first edition and of the second edition.

<sup>22</sup> *Satyra* I, 30.

Indeed: there will be plenty of material as long as there are people, and they will be there as long as we are there. Fortunately, people have the liberty to think and say whatever they wish, as long as they are wise enough to keep quiet about the government and about religion. No problem, Van Bynkershoek adds ironically: 'There is nothing to comment on both in our country'. It is different abroad: there are lots of things to comment on there. Van Bynkershoek promises that the new periodical will abstain from 'particularization', that is criticizing recognizable persons. Thus the 'leges Satyrae' will be maintained. Finally, Van Bynkershoek promises that the truth and nothing but the truth will be spoken, 'unless this would be inopportune'—an ingenious way to announce that he will reserve a certain liberty concerning his subjects. This statement and the one about the impeccability of religion in Patria undoubtedly justified the expectations about the newcomer in May 1699.

How did Van Bynkershoek present himself to the readers of his *Mercur*? First of all as a son of 'Father Juvenal' (p. 2), as a devoted disciple of the satirists of all times: the classics Horace, Persius, Lucian, Petronius and more recent writers from Leiden like Lipsius, Heinsius and Cunaeus (pp. 114–115). He also presented himself as a lawyer, a member of the 'Ordre', as he called himself repeatedly, and as appeared from his legal insight (pp. 12, 35, 41, 53, 79). Further, as a playful bachelor (p. 31), certainly not a settled family man. Also as an admirer of the stadholder-king William III (pp. 52, 125–126).<sup>23</sup> As a poltergeist for Doedijns, pestering the competitor in order to promote his own periodical (pp. 1–2, 77–80, 143), a method that was applied more than once; twenty years later Weyerman did the same.<sup>24</sup> Finally, as the author of a periodical who thought it worthwhile to explain to his public what his difficult task implied and what skills were demanded (pp. 140–143), a well-known phenomenon at the time.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Van Bynkershoek's later rejection of the House of Orange, which Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 57, already observed in the *Mercur*, is not apparent.

<sup>24</sup> See for the battle between Jacob Campo Weyerman's *Rotterdamsche Hermes* and the *Amsterdamsche Argus* by Hermanus van den Burg the dissertation by Groenenboom-Draai E., *De Rotterdamsche Woelreus* (Amsterdam/Atlanta: 1994).

<sup>25</sup> An example of such a text in a learned periodical is the preface in Le Clerc J., *Bibliothèque Universelle et Historique* (Amsterdam: January 1686). An example of such an explanation in a satirical magazine is 'Het papieren Voorhangsel' in Jacob Campo Weyerman's *Den Amsterdamschen Hermes*, I (Amsterdam: 1721–1722).

Van Bynkershoek was certainly not a repentant sinner, when he saw his periodical banned. He did not desert his *Mercur* but admonished the public to read it. After thirty numbers Van Bynkershoek declared the paper to be 'Complete'. Maybe this was true: *mercures* were indeed filled with brief comments and not with 'continuous matter'. His farewell letter in the beaten *Mercur*, with the opening words 'To the Mercurial Reader', explained that the periodical would be stopped because the 'Hooge Overigheyd' (High Authority) had issued a ban. A younger contemporary would say later that this had been a regulation of the 'Curia Hollandiae', the Court of Holland, directed at all the *mercures*, but Van Bynkershoek's 'petulantia', his arrogant style, seems to have provoked it.<sup>26</sup> He had seen the storm coming for some time and in number 18 he announced that the 'Mercurio-graphi' were accused of 'libertinage' (p. 113). Now, in his farewell letter to the public, Van Bynkershoek admitted that what had been called 'libertinage' might have been the cause of the authority's action. He thought the criticism hair-splitting, and referring his readers to number 18 he branded the measure as 'exaggerated'—'excessit medicina modum'. There he had written about criticism on preachers as Calvin himself had once ventilated. There had also been some rumour about 'a certain Inquisitor General', a figure operating outside the Reformed Church and bothering high and low with matters of conscience. In his farewell speech Van Bynkershoek exclaimed: 'If only Calvin were still alive!', to which he added an obscure statement about the order of the Dominicans. The majority of them had taken too little notice of Van Bynkershoek's plea for the freedom to write satires. At that time the Dominicans did not have a residence in The Hague anymore.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps they symbolized for him Catholic intolerance, as they had often been inquisitors. Whatever the case may have been, it is clear that the clergy, Protestants and perhaps also Roman Catholics, did not appreciate Van Bynkershoek's criticism. The reproach of 'libertinism' is more important, for this localizes the ideas ventilated by Van Bynkershoek

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Star Numan O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek* (note 1) 63, note 2. This younger contemporary was Gerard Meerman (1722–1771), Pensionary of Rotterdam and a renowned historian. See *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, I, cols. 1320–1321. Research in relevant archives was in vain. Perhaps Van Bynkershoek was summoned by the Court and sent away after an oral admonition.

<sup>27</sup> Cfr. *Conspectus Historicus et Statisticus Provinciae Germanicae Fratrum Sacri Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Rotterdam: 1895) 58.

in 1699 in the wide stream of the rising Northern Netherlands Enlightenment. That is, alongside its Reformatory variant, supported by someone like the minister Balthasar Bekker<sup>28</sup> and next to a radical wing where, amongst others, the ideas of Spinoza were cherished.<sup>29</sup> Thoughts found in the *Mercur* would then flow into a third channel of this stream of Enlightenment. Was there a certain aversion to rigid orthodoxy? Libertinism too was pluriform with an erudite representative next to a libidinous and a non-pious, profane one.<sup>30</sup> Investigation of Van Bynkershoek's *Mercur* will reveal what this libertinism implied. There are other interesting aspects in the farewell letter to the readers of the forbidden periodical. The one-time journalist made sure that he submitted himself to the Dutch Authorities, just as bishop Fénelon had recently accepted the papal verdict of a controversial book.<sup>31</sup> A piquant comparison: Dutch next to papal censorship. There was no need to fear ageing of satirical literature as the *mercures*, Van Bynkershoek declared, appealing to a dictum by Rabelais. Neither persons nor current events but permanent moral failings formed the subject of these criticisms.

Finally, the poem explaining the etched frontispiece of the second edition, by the famous engraver Simon Fokke, deserves some attention.<sup>32</sup> The poet speaks about the 'benefit and pleasure' which the book has in store for its readers, an obligatory formula at the time.<sup>33</sup> Satyrs in the foreground amuse themselves with opened writings by Juvenal, Petronius, Boileau, Rabelais, Molière and Ovid, illustrious examples that Van Bynkershoek availed himself of as a satirist. He sharply criticized the 'Preacher, Lawyer and Doctor', people who were educated at one of the higher faculties of a university. They were indeed having a hard time in the *Mercur*. In the following we will concentrate on Van Bynkershoek's dressing down of the first category.

<sup>28</sup> See for recent research on Balthasar Bekker (1634–1698), Sluis J. van *e.a.* (eds.), *It beken. Tydschrift fan de Fryske Akademy* 58 (1996).

<sup>29</sup> Cfr. Israel J.I., *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford: 2001).

<sup>30</sup> Cfr. Adam A., *Les Libertins au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1964).

<sup>31</sup> Condemnation of *Explication des maximes des saints sur la vie intérieure* (Paris: 1697) in 1699. See note 72.

<sup>32</sup> The illustration was drawn and engraved in 1744. See on Simon Fokke (1712–1784) Fontaine Verwey E. de la, *De illustratie van letterkundige werken in de XVIII<sup>e</sup> eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1934), 71–82.

<sup>33</sup> Cfr. Horace's 'omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci' (*Ars poetica*, 343).

*Background of the ban*

Modern historians have paid little attention to the ban of the *mercures* in early September 1699.<sup>34</sup> In a contemporary pamphlet, however, published anonymously,<sup>35</sup> the ghosts of Cato and Maecenas discuss the cause of the verdict in a dialogue between the dead, a fashionable literary genre at the time. They say that the native ministers are offended, just as the minister Dr Mayer of Hamburg. The latter had also got a roasting by Doedijns. This ambitious, vain and quarrelsome theologian had been ridiculed by Van Bynkershoek when he had his oration for the marriage of a German prince, the King of the Romans, printed on precious gold and silver cloth on the town's account. The minister had then been raised to Count Palatine (pp. 154–155).<sup>36</sup> Cato and Maecenas remark that on the pulpit preachers permit themselves to reproach their parishoners mercilessly for their errors, but as ecclesiastical functionaries they consider themselves inviolable. What irritated them most of all, was that 'the good people' were so amused by the *mercures* that they would rather read one *mercure* than listen to three sermons. This striking difference in popularity for those in comparable functions would not have astonished Van Bynkershoek. In his periodical he had argued that the preacher and the satirist have the same aim: moral improvement of humanity. The first one by showing the sweetness of virtue, the other by picturing the horrors of vice. They were colleagues in moralizing (pp. 114–115).

*Notes of a thorough anticlerical*

Van Bynkershoek wrote many comments in his *Mercur* on clergymen of Protestant as well as Roman Catholic denomination. He

<sup>34</sup> The verdict was not stated in W.P.C. Knuttel, *Verboden boeken in de Republiek der Vereenigde Nederlanden* (The Hague: 1914) or Weekhout I., *Boekencensuur in de Noordelijke Nederlanden. De vrijheid van drukpers in de zeventiende eeuw* (The Hague: 1998). Vliet R. van, *Hendrik Doedijns* (note 7) 37, mentions the pamphlet stated in note 35.

<sup>35</sup> *Mercurius in den Rouw, of T'zamenspraak tusschen de Geest van Cato en Maecenas, Over het goede en quade der Mercuren*, The Hague, Joh. Kitto, 1699. Knuttel no. 14455.

<sup>36</sup> See on Johann Friedrich Mayer (1650–1712), representative of the Lutheran orthodoxy and principal minister of the Jacobi church at Hamburg during 1686–1701, *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 21 (Leipzig: 1885), 99–108; Dauer G., *Von Predigern und Bürgern. Eine hamburgische Kirchengeschichte von der Reformation bis zur Gegenwart* (Hamburg: 1970) 109–120; Vliet R. van, *Hendrik Doedijns* (note 7) 32–33 and *passim*.

pointed to a general decline of religiosity affecting 'Professores Theologiae' as well as 'Cathechumens' (p. 195). Students of theology seem to be incapable of correcting their bad behaviour 'before they don their bands and gowns' (p. 106). Writing about the American mission, Van Bynkershoek declared he would like to get rid of quite a number of Dutch proponents of this sort by shipping them off to the New World (p. 117). A satirist does not have any reason to screen the ministers, he said. In extenso he quoted a passage of *De Scandalis* by Joannes Calvin that was indeed very outspoken,<sup>37</sup> a punishing address of which he would remind his readers in his farewell letter, as has been mentioned before. In a free translation this passage says:

[Besides other ailments] the Church is tormented by a sore that hurts her even more, which is that the shepherds, yes the shepherds themselves, I say, who climb the pulpit, Christ's holy chair of justice, under the condition that they excel in purity of life over all the others, are sometimes the most scandalous champions in dissoluteness and other vices. The result is that their sermons do not contain any more faith and seriousness than would be the case when a comedian on the stage would perform a comedy. And such men are complaining that they are despised by the people who point their fingers at them. I rather wonder at the patience of the common people, that women and children do not hurl mud and dung at them. Etc. (pp. 115–116).

Van Bynkershoek did not translate this quotation: 'with reason'. Many of his readers, however, will not have had problems reading Latin, least of all the ministers. For those who should have been concerned about Calvin's words, Van Bynkershoek had had the last sentence printed in challenging capitals. He thought he was in his right to say such things, but he was aware of the risk of this frankness: what the 'Patres', the Church Fathers, had dared to assert, would have turned others into heretics. Van Bynkershoek sailed on the compass that religion must not be ridiculed, but that for those who served it dishonourably there was no compassion.

Van Bynkershoek's mercurial arrows hit the Roman Catholic clergy more often than Protestant ministers. It is true that he thought that all those who were in the service of the altar should be allowed to live off it,<sup>38</sup> as he said jokingly but with a serious undertone about

<sup>37</sup> *De Scandalis quibus hodie plerique absterrentur [. . .], Joannis Calvini libellus* (Geneva: 1551).

<sup>38</sup> 1 Cor. 9:13.

sextons filching leftovers of wine and bits of candles (p. 152). But on the other hand, he found the lives led by the higher Catholic clergy extravagant and far from pastoral. A conference of bishops in Lyon spent a lot of time on dining and concerts before they got round to 'ecclesiastical matters'. Such clergymen devoted the better part of their lives to entertainment, Van Bynkershoek stated (p. 120). Moreover, he found the Catholic clergy not very principled. In Poland they had taken action against the theatre, but they dropped all their objections when they were offered a pro deo admittance (p. 60). Monks sometimes were thieves: after a big fire in Vienna, extinguished by Franciscans, Augustinians, Capuchins and Jesuits, all sorts of things had disappeared (p. 145). And what about the Franciscan who was bitten to death by a dog in somebody's yard: had he come there to beg or to steal (p. 137)? Such digs, and there are quite a few of them, prove that Van Bynkershoek had little respect for the Catholic clergy.

Marriage and sexuality, favourite topics of Van Bynkershoek, were items that also occupied him with regard to the clergy. He made an interesting remark on the Protestant ministers who, in contrast to the Catholic priests, were underpaid and could therefore often not afford 'a wife or common tart', a statement for which he referred to an investigation made by Lieuwe van Aitzema (pp. 55–56).<sup>39</sup> For the Catholic clergy the shoe pinched in a different way. They were bound by the celibacy, a subject Van Bynkershoek loved to gossip about, although this did not exclude some more serious comment. He reported, for instance, that the 'Auditor of the Rota Romana' did not want to become an archbishop, because he wanted to get married. No problem, it was suggested to him, but only use nuns and beguines as dispensation, quietly, within doors and without consequences (p. 10). For chastity's sake Van Bynkershoek would rather forbid Catholic priests to have sex at all (pp. 167–168), but he did not explain how it would be possible to forbid something that was already forbidden. In another item, however, he pleaded for allowing marriage to all the Roman Catholic clergy. If only Ottoboni

---

<sup>39</sup> *Historie of verhael van saken van staet en oorlogh, in, ende ontrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden*, vol. XIII, Book 47 (The Hague: 1669), 713–715. For this argument Van Bynkershoek used a rather outdated source.

were pope, he would certainly arrange it.<sup>40</sup> What Van Bynkershoek wanted to say was that he was a different type than the withered, dried-out popes who, themselves impotent and jealous, begrudged others their pleasures and therefore had imposed celibacy on them. However, lifting it, he joked, would be a pity for the nuns and for the women who now get a second helping. A fattened monk need not be second to Mohammed in procreativity, Van Bynkershoek ascertained. This observation was not a summum of subtlety, but neither was it an anecdote surpassing the limits of contemporary wit. Van Bynkershoek was enough of a lawyer to round off this statement in a canonical way by arguing that a woman who could not have legitimate children by her husband and had been made pregnant in a monastery, should be returned to her spouse because of the sanctity of the sacrament of holy matrimony.<sup>41</sup> Then why should not monks marry, Van Bynkershoek joked. The price of camphor would also fall drastically (pp. 187–188).<sup>42</sup>

*On ecclesiastical fragmentation*

The religious discord of his day, the result of old schism and never-ending dogmatic quarrels induced Van Bynkershoek regularly to comment on news items in the papers. There was no evading taking sides, he thought, and neutrality in religious issues was not always preferable, sometimes even objectionable: 'Those of Laodicea do not have the whitest feet.'<sup>43</sup> (p. 176). An item on Czar Peter, planning to discuss a reunion of the Greek and Latin churches with the pope in Rome, was received by Van Bynkershoek with a cynical comment. The Russian will make a present to the pope of a load of sables, he suggested. In other words: it is power which is the drive here, not oecumenical delusions (p. 26). The fragmentation taking place in

---

<sup>40</sup> Probably this was one of the nephews of Pope Alexander VIII (Pietro Ottoboni, pontificate 1689–1691), Pietro or Marco Ottoboni.

<sup>41</sup> Stipulation by Pope Innocent III (1198–1216), *Ius Canonicum*, 'Caput 3. Decret d. frigid. & malefic.'

<sup>42</sup> Camphor: remedy to temper the sexual urge, also used against the 'Venus disease', venereal disease. Cfr. *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, VII–1, (The Hague/Leiden: 1926) 1123.

<sup>43</sup> *Apocalypse* 3:14–18.

Protestantism did not escape Van Bynkershoek. He discerned 'various sorts among the Mennonites: strict, stricter, and super strict' (p. 119). He wrote a passage on the situation in the Netherlands somewhat resembling the well-known sally by Jean-Baptiste Stoupe in his *La Religion des Hollandois*,<sup>44</sup> even though his summing up is much shorter than the list made by the Swiss about twenty-five years earlier and it is remarkable that he forgot one of the largest religious communities in the Republic: the Roman Catholic. He mentioned:

Cocceians, Voetians, Mixti, kindred spirits of Koelman,<sup>45</sup> of Bekker, of Roëll, Hebrews, Hattemists etc. for who can count them? (p. 119).

There is some irritation resounding about those who made Christ's church fall apart into special creeds.

Among others this was due to professors such as Johannes Cocceius from Leiden, who based his principles on hermeneutic ideas thus developing the exegesis of Bible texts. He was considered the counterpart of professor Gisbertus Voetius of Utrecht whose Bible interpretations were stiffened by Aristotelianism and the formulas of Dordt. Van Bynkershoek voiced his criticism by mocking the Cocceians as people who managed to get more out of a text than the author had ever put into it (p. 159).<sup>46</sup> Evidently he had also found a group in-between, the 'Mixti' who let themselves be guided now by Cocceius and then by Voetius.

There was a deep gap between the first two groups, but the distance between those sympathizing with the ministers Jacobus Koelman

<sup>44</sup> Cologne (chez Pierre Marteau: 1673), 64–65.

<sup>45</sup> The Dutch indication 'Koelmannisten' used here by Van Bynkershoek may refer to the adherents of Jacobus Koelman, but also to those of Quirinus Kuhlman. With a view to the composition of the list the first possibility is most likely: the disciples of Koelman and those of Bekker were adversaries, like the Voetians and Cocceians. See on Jacobus Koelman (1632–1695), Pietist, assertive theologian and organisator of conventicles, Krull A.F., *Jacobus Koelman. Eene Kerkhistorische Studie* (Groningen: 1901) en Bie J.P. de e.a., *Biographisch Woordenboek van Protestantsche Godgeleerden in Nederland*, 5 (The Hague: 1943) 91–110. See on Quirinus Kuhlman (1651–1689), a Silesian who broke off his law studies in Leiden in 1673 in order to become a chiliastic prophet, and who died in Moscow at the stake, Hylkema C.B., *Reformatours. Geschiedkundige studiën over de godsdienstige bewegingen uit de nadagen onzer gouden eeuw* (Haarlem: 1900) 45 and passim, and Kolakowski L., *Chrétiens sans Eglise* (Paris: 1969) 651, 658, 759.

<sup>46</sup> See on Johannes Cocceius (1603–1669), Asselt W.J. van, *Johannes Cocceius. Portret van een zeventiende-eeuws theoloog op oude en nieuwe wegen* (Heerenveen: 1997) and idem, *Amicitia Dei. Een onderzoek naar de structuur van de theologie van Johannes Cocceius* (Ede: 1988). See on Voetius Duker A.C., *Gisbertus Voetius* (Leiden: 1897–1915) and Niet C.A. de, *De praktijk der godzaligheid* (Utrecht: 1996).

and Balthasar Bekker was no less.<sup>47</sup> The first ones belonged to the most fierce opposers of Bekker's book *De Betoverde Weereld* (1691–1693) which attacked the belief in the earthly power and influence of the devil. Van Bynkershoek himself did not think of the devil for a phenomenon like a man possessed, but of 'passions' (p. 68), an enlightened point of view. Next in the list there is the name of his former teacher Roëll; evidently he was also held responsible for the discord. The 'Hebrews', thus called because they wanted to read the Bible in the original languages, were exposed to repressive measures by the Church and the state because of their criticism on the Public Church. Their foreman, Jacobus Verschoor (1648–1700), proclaimed the sinlessness of the chosen and allowed women the right to prophesy and explain the Scriptures, an emancipatory aspect. This movement began to decline and in the towns of Holland, such as Leiden and The Hague, it had not many adherents left as a result of the repression.<sup>48</sup> It was different for the Hattemists, who were also persecuted, but who were heard until far after 1700. These followers of Pontiaan van Hattem (1645–1706), a Pietist with a certain inclination towards pantheism, were branded as 'erring spirits' and wrongly accused of Spinozism.<sup>49</sup>

*A plea for tolerance, but to what extent?*

So much for Van Bynkershoek's view on the landscape of Dutch Protestantism. His resentment is tangible. What he thought about religious intolerance is still implicit here, but it became more explicit in a later summarizing passage and elsewhere. He mentioned, for instance, that the governor of Strassbourg ordered the Protestants to expurgate the 'old, cold song' in which God is called upon to stop

<sup>47</sup> See on Koelman and Bekker notes 45 and 28 respectively.

<sup>48</sup> See Wielema M.R., *Ketters en Verlichters. De invloed van het Spinozisme en Wolffianisme op de Verlichting in gereformeerd Nederland* (diss. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam: 1999) 17–35.

<sup>49</sup> Cfr. *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, 6 (Leiden: 1924) 727–728; Sassen F., *Geschiedenis van de wijsbegeerte in Nederland tot het einde van de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam/Brussels: 1959) 206–207; Wielema M.R., *Ketters en Verlichters* (note 48) 24, note 29; *idem*. 'Spinoza in Zeeland' in: Bunge W. van – Klever W. (eds.), *Disguised and overt Spinozism around 1700* (Leiden: 1996) 103–115; Israel, J.I., *Radical Enlightenment* (note 29) 186 note 8, 308 and *passim*.

the pope and 'the devil's murder'. The Jesuits there will have to abstain from cursing and slandering each other as well as the 'sectarians'. They will be forbidden to preach on 'controversies' and will have to restrict themselves to explaining God's word. Thus all disagreements will automatically be cured, Van Bynkershoek thought (pp. 119–120). He chided intolerance and chose for moderation. When the Catholic inquisition had someone executed, he disapproved of this institution, calling it a 'Cyclops' den' for its victims. Rome is building more and more dungeons to lock up all learning. Inquisitors are 'Monarchs of conscience' who claim the liberty of destroying all good thoughts. 'Here we are free from the tyranny of the souls' after a long fight. Don't let them try to bring their mischief back into the Republic under a different name! (pp. 128–129). A plea against intolerance as well as a warning. When the Swiss cantons, traditionally the suppliers of mercenaries, persecuted the Mennonites—who are principally against war—Van Bynkershoek was confronted with a dilemma. The Republic tried to mediate with its Swiss allies, but in vain. Moreover, the Reformed cantons were the most fierce persecutors. Van Bynkershoek condemned the persecution 'Theologicè', but praised it 'Politicè' as 'Salus Populi suprema lex esto'. When it appeared that the soldiers' pay brought in money, Van Bynkershoek did not know how to adopt an unambiguous viewpoint where tolerance was concerned (pp. 118–119).

### *Parodies of spirituality*

For the Mennonites defencelessness was more than an article of faith, it was the lifeblood providing the body of their piety with vigour up to the most remote cells. The question presents itself now whether Van Bynkershoek had enough religious empathy to judge the authenticity of the many varied expressions of religious life he observed. The last number of his periodical, the only one not to contain any comments on newspapers, offers some answer to this question. His story was that the god Mercury had brought a message from heaven about the goddess Pietas lamenting the decline of religiousness on earth. She has become the laughing stock of the most inferior inmates of heaven, because the few pious people left on earth are pestered with a true 'Alphabet of nicknames'. Then follows an alphabetical list of characterizations—about seventy of them: most of the letters are used

more than once—which would have done credit to Rabelais (pp. 193–194).<sup>50</sup> There are synonyms and words with a related significance, so that certain categories of indication may be discerned. Among the churchgoers Van Bynkershoek signals various sorts of blockheads, scatter-brains and wayward people besides fanatics, agitators and schismatics, but also bigots and very strict believers or Puritans, hairsplitters and prigs. Further, pious people who call each other brothers, sisters, or ‘the Friends’ laden with deep feeling, but for others appearing as an incrowd of canting nutcases. There are also hypocrites as well as neurotics, the so-called melancholics.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the alphabet has Sabbatarians,<sup>52</sup> people who expect their salvation from charities like Catholics, and ‘Geuze-Kloppen’, a pejorative indication of Protestant virgins, behaving like Catholics in the service of their communities. Van Bynkershoek assured his readers that he possessed ‘tons’ of such qualifications. Strikingly among all the abusive terms there are also groups who are named after their religious foremen, such as the Voetians and the representatives of Willem Teellinck’s<sup>53</sup> ‘Dutch Further Reformation’. Evidently for Van Bynkershoek they were all birds of one feather. The Quakers, a growing group in the Republic,<sup>54</sup> also occur in the alphabet. Definitely not

<sup>50</sup> The summing up, which cannot possibly be translated in alphabetical order, is given here in Dutch. For comparison see: François Rabelais, *Le tiers livre du bon Pantagruel*, 38, *Le quart livre*, 40.

*Mercur* pp. 193–194: ‘spot-namen, als van Ajuinen, Albedillen, Belhamels, Bybel-dragers, de Broeders, Bybel-susters, Capricieuse, Casuïsten, Devotarissen, Eygensinnige, Eygenwyse, Fanatyke, Fymelaers, de Fyne, Gat-heilige, Geest-dryvers, Geuze-kloppen, Hair-klovers, de Heilige, Hypocriten, Idioten, Indiscrete, Kerk-loopers, Kerk-uylen, Koppige, Krayers, Krieb-byters, Kryters, Melancholyke, Muggesifters, Neuswyze, Onrustige, Onverdraeglyke, Onverzettelike, Oproer-makers, Pedanten, Perfectisten, Phantastyke, Pharizeen, Pilaer-byters, Precisianen, Puriteinen, Quakers, Quesels, Roervinken, Sabbatharissen, Scheur-makers, Schyn-heilige, Semel-knoopers, Steil-ooren, Sint Juinen, Sombere, Splinter-kykers, Styf-koppen, Style-byters, Suffers, Susjes, Teelingisten, Tertuffes, Vieshoofden, Voetianen, de Vrienden, de Vrome, Wargeesten, Wedergeborene, Weet-nieten, Werk-heilige, Wet-predikers, Wint-buylen . . .’

<sup>51</sup> Van Bynkershoek may have thought of Robert Burton’s *The anatomy of melancholy* (the last edition of 1651, enlarged by the author) which was much read and contains a consideration on religious melancholy.

<sup>52</sup> Sabbatarians, e.g. Koelman: Christians who regarded the Lord’s Day as a sabbath, deducing its obligation from the Fourth Commandment.

<sup>53</sup> See on Willem Teellinck (1578–1629) Engelberts W.J.M., *Willem Teellinck* (Amsterdam: 1898); Bouwman H., *Willem Teellinck en de practijk der Godzaligheid* (Kampen 1985); Israel J.I., *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness and Fall* (Oxford: 1995) 474–477.

<sup>54</sup> Israel J.I., *The Dutch Republic* (note 53) 654; Lindeboom J., *Stiefkinderen van het christendom* (The Hague: 1929) 353.

because the letter Q formed a problem for Van Bynkershoek's alphabetical list, but simply because he detested 'The Friends' for their extravagant behaviour. In 1656 their leader, James Nayler, had entered Bristol like Jesus had done Jerusalem, with the people chanting 'Hosanna'. For Van Bynkershoek this was 'damned superstition', as despicable as the excesses of the Anabaptists had been in the last century (p. 152).<sup>55</sup> Derisively he compared the muddled prophesies of these 'fanatics' to the 'Coax, coax' of the frogs in Aristophanes's comedy; this sound was a plausible explanation of the name 'Quakers', he mocked (pp. 196–197).

*No atheism, but not too much religion either*

Evidently Van Bynkershoek did not have a high opinion of the sorts of piety he had alphabetized and he was probably not very susceptible to these kinds of religious movements. He rather supported the line 'Enfin que tout Devot a le cerveau perdu' (p. 194). Neither did he approve of the opposite of complete impiety. He could not agree with those who believed that 'nullos esse Deos, & inane caelum'. 'Monsters' they were, but nevertheless they had always been 'reputed for their keenest minds and greatest genius'. A peculiar homage. Was there a suppressed longing in Van Bynkershoek to join this intelligent club and to think beyond the scope of his Christian world view? The jumpy way in which he resumed himself gives us an indication, but the formal contents of this turn close the door for further speculations at the same time and moreover the satirical scope of it all spreads a smoke screen. Van Bynkershoek saw the atheists laying 'drowned in a pool of bleak ignorance'. He could have proved it, but he did not want to become involved with 'that lot'. This sounds a bit too firm. In fact he regarded the Spinozist Jean-Maximilien Lucas as a man with brains, he knew the libertine Adriaen Beverland in person and read his work, he pored over a work by the deist and libertine Isaac Vossius. Nor does he seem to have been unaware of the thoughts of Pieter de la Court (pp. 39–40, 164, 167, 175).<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> James Naylor (1616/17–1660) was accused of blasphemy after his entry and was harshly punished. Van Bynkershoek reminded his readers of the actions of Jan Beukelsz./Jan van Leiden which he dated erroneously in 1530.

<sup>56</sup> See on Jean-Maximilien Lucas (1646–1697) Israel J.I., *Radical Enlightenment* (note

He valued Machiavelli's justification of breach of promise in *Il Principe* XVIII (pp. 27–28). Not a society of 'Church owls', if we may borrow a term of Van Bynkershoek's alphabet.

Yet what was really the man's opinion on belief and religion in 1699? Now and then in his role as *Mercur* writer he released something. For instance, he declared that he wanted to believe only a necessary minimum of what was beyond his comprehension for fear of relapsing into superstition (p. 18). He did not let himself be forced by ecclesiastical authority, which he compared to the 'autos epha, my Master said so' of the Pythagoreans. If a religion has no other foundation, too strong an appeal will be made on belief. He who does not possess enough of it, is in for bad luck, for it cannot be bought in the shops (p. 144). Van Bynkershoek was averse to fanaticism and readily agreed with Lucretius' dictum 'So much evil may be done by holy diligence' (p. 17).<sup>57</sup> Neither was he willing to listen to biblicism: biblical regulations demand a different explanation now from those used in early Christian times (p. 149). Finally, materialism that denies a life after death as well as eternal reward or punishment he thought of as arch-heresy and not pronounced by Origen, as someone had argued (pp. 48–49).

### *Roman Catholicism*

In Van Bynkershoek's list of sects and his heckling alphabet the Catholics seem to be non-existent, but elsewhere in the *Mercur* the members of the World Church were certainly not forgotten. After

---

29) 303–306 and passim. For some years since 1689 Lucas had edited the scandal magazine *Quintessence des nouvelles historiques, politiques, morales et galantes*. Cfr. Sgard J., *Dictionnaire des journalistes 1600–1789*, no. 531. See on Adriaen Beverland (1650–1716) Israel J.I., *Radical Enlightenment* (note 29) 87–88 and Leemans I., *Het woord is aan de onderkant. Radicale ideeën in Nederlandse pornografische romans 1670–1700* (Nijmegen: 2002) 250–256 and passim. Van Bynkershoek mentioned Beverland's *De fornicatione cavenda admonitio* (1698). See on Isaac Vossius (1618–1689) Israel J.I., *Radical Enlightenment* (note 29) 451, passim, and *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* 1, 1519–1525. Van Bynkershoek read his *Variarum Observationum liber* (London: 1685). See on Pieter de la Court (1618–1685), Blom H.W. – Wildenberg I.W. (eds.), *Pieter de la Court in zijn tijd* (Amsterdam/Maarssen: 1986). De la Court was denied to take Holy Communion in 1662. Like Spinoza he opposed the special position of ministers. Van Bynkershoek hinted at De la Court's *Aanweysing der heilsame politieke gronden en maximen van de Republiek van Holland en West-Vriesland* (1669).

<sup>57</sup> Lucretius, *De rerum natura* I, 101: 'Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum'.

the Treaty of Munster tolerance towards the Roman Catholics gradually grew, but it remained a process with lapses and great local differences.<sup>58</sup> In this milder climate the kind of remarks Van Bynkershoek thought up for the Catholic world fitted well. They are characterized by chauvinism, nearly always lack originality and are seldom malicious, but he got the full blame for them. At least, he mentioned that he had been called a heretic and had heard more swear-words than are found in the satire *Ibis* 'by the amorous Great-nose', that is Ovid Naso (p. 103). Among Van Bynkershoek's banterings there are stories about miracle frauds, on 'prizes won in the Pontifical Lotteries of Miracles' as he called them, worked by the kind of saints that are found in the *Legenda Aurea*.<sup>59</sup> For instance, the arm of Nicholas of Tolentino has bled again: a matter of a bag of blood and a pin-prick, Van Bynkershoek suggested. A hunchback miraculously cured . . . Van Bynkershoek heard him in person about a bag of air and the indispensable needle (pp. 103–104). Further, stale jokes on swindle with relics, on the shift of the Virgin Mary in the collection of the 'Dumb Chapter of Aachen' among other things (p. 61)—the pun on dumb and dome appears twice (also p. 103)—or on material coughed up by St Joseph (p. 174). Of course there are plenty of digs on guzzling pilgrims (p. 63), easy absolutions and the many Catholic holy days (p. 144). His tone is more serious when he writes about missionaries who long ago threatened reluctant converts with hell (p. 184) and with malicious pleasure he reported that the Jesuits had not been able to convert the Emperor of China (p. 22).

The *Mercur* is brimming with popes and cardinals. The Borgia pope Alexander VI is memorized for his poison and his natural children (p. 31). Van Bynkershoek deals ironically with the many titles of the pope such as 'Episcopus servorum Dei', 'Successor Sancti Petri' and 'servus servorum Dei' (pp. 13–14). He criticizes the popes for raising themselves above St Peter and the apostles—at least, that is what he suspects—because as popes they would hand out richer

<sup>58</sup> Knuttel W.P.C., *De toestand der Nederlandsche katholieken ten tijde der Republiek*, I, (The Hague: 1892) 297–308 and passim; Broeyer F.G.M., "Ijkpunt 1650. 'Andere gezinsheden met tollerantie getolereert'", in: Augustijn C. – Honnée E. (eds.), *Vervreemding en verzoening. De relatie tussen katholieken en protestanten in Nederland 1550–2000* (Nijmegen: 1998) 54–59; Spaans J., "De katholieken in de Republiek na de vrede van Munster", *De zeventiende eeuw* 13,1 (1997) 253–260.

<sup>59</sup> Collection of hagiographies by Jacobus de Voragine (ca. 1228–1298).

alms: let them raise the dead, as the apostles did! (p. 160). Being a pope is a 'wonderful job' and of course many a cardinal can hardly wait to take his turn (p. 160). Is the power of His Holiness really as great as they say? Van Bynkershoek does not think so and quotes the French statesman Colbert who found the bombs and shells of his royal master much more effective than the papal excommunications (p. 107). Van Bynkershoek's blindness for the symbolic use of language and veracity of old legends is also revealing for his mentality. The story of the cross that the Emperor Constantine saw in the sky,<sup>60</sup> is a fable for him, but one that he had once 'taken for ready money', as he acknowledged honestly (pp. 17–18). Had he become more rationalistic then? The spirit of the age was developing in this direction, a process that neither the Protestant, nor the Catholic intelligentsia could escape. The legend mentioned had become Roman Catholic superstition for Van Bynkershoek with which he joked overtly, as he did with the *Donatio Constantini* of which the deceit had already been stated long ago (pp. 56–57).<sup>61</sup> Sometimes news from the Catholic world astonished Van Bynkershoek, decreasing his feelings of superiority. The forty-hour prayer, for instance: Protestants are already sullen when the service is drawn out by half an hour, he said (p. 52). More often, however, he took the Catholic news rationally and as a matter of fact. A report from Madrid, for instance, that a police officer, with a crucifix in his hand and two thousand armed men behind him, had managed to suppress a hunger riot by sheer words. Neither the crucifix, nor the speech mattered, Van Bynkershoek knew, but 'the terrible sight of the two thousand men' did! (p. 17). Doedijns looked upon this incident with the same irony.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> Before the battle near the Pons Milvius against Maxentius in 312 the Emperor Constantine the Great supposedly saw the sign of the cross in the sky with the words 'In hoc signo vinces'.

<sup>61</sup> According to a falsified codex of the 8th or 9th century the Emperor Constantine the Great donated the highest authority over all the patriarchates and the bishoprics to Pope Sylvester I as well as all the imperial possessions in the West-Roman realm. This deceit had already been suspected by Nicolaus Cusanus and Lorenzo Valla in the 15th century, but it was not until the 17th century that a prominent Catholic like Cardinal Baronio recognized that the donation was not authentic.

<sup>62</sup> *Haegse Mercuur*. No. 88, 6 June 1699.

*On Jews*

Van Bynkershoek's periodical contains a few objectional items on Jews, but hardly anything about their religion. He states that commercial interest and official arbitrariness decided whether the Jews were permitted to 'practise the Religion of their Fathers' (p. 118). The Jews want a 'visible government they do not have anywhere now'. Yet they possess a quarter of all the treasures of Europe—an old myth—and are said to be unreliable in trade (pp. 100–101). Van Bynkershoek approves of the idea that Jews were obliged to wear distinctive clothing (pp. 157–158). In such passages there is not much to be found of the Enlightenment yet.

*On Church and State*

Of much more interest are some of the ideas of the jurist Van Bynkershoek on the relations between Church and State. In his opinion religion was of no less importance to a country than money. If the first one is not in a good condition, it would be impossible to reign a country. If the nervous system of 'a dominant religion' was not in good shape, the complete body of the state might be hit by a terrible cramp. There were 'wheelbarrows full of examples' (p. 118). As a starting point Van Bynkershoek held that every sovereign could promulgate laws to regulate religion and civil government. He thought it irrelevant whether the sovereign was led by pious zeal or by political views. If religion was subordinated to the state, in the way the Turks organized it, all creeds would enjoy liberty. If this liberty was denied by 'a holy passion', in itself excusable, this would lead to 'notorious damage of the interests of the nation'. Van Bynkershoek preferred the current system in the Republic, that is 'keeping to the middle-of-the-road, as we do' (pp. 170–171). With these ideas about the dominant church, the authority of politics and tolerance, Van Bynkershoek was close to Pieter de la Court.<sup>63</sup> The government should use its power against unreasonable sectarians, he thought (pp. 48–49). He found it justified to take measures against clergymen using their pulpits for political messages, or criticism on the government. Thus he applauded the exile of a French Jesuit who preached

---

<sup>63</sup> Cfr. Blom H.W. – Wildenberg I.W., *Pieter de la Court* (note 56) 146.

about state affairs and he positively evaluated the 'iterative Resolutions' that by the end of 1665 the Dutch government had promulgated against ministers in whom a remnant was left of 'papist leaven', that is of an ecclesiastical thirst for power. The 'ignorance' of such preachers might sow 'great misunderstanding' among the population (pp. 43–44).<sup>64</sup> When the Turkish clergy obstructed a peace treaty because it did not agree with the Koran and incited a revolt, Van Bynkershoek emphatically disapproved: 'If the clergy tries to dominate politics, people will act desperately' (pp. 38, 102). That a theological and a political judgement could be at strife, was something he was thoroughly aware of (p. 119).

*An enlightened mind against superstition*

Van Bynkershoek's ideas on religion, piety, and churches did not stand apart from his other notions; together they formed a coherent world view. This must have been decisive for the mentality with which he looked upon life. It makes it worthwhile to signal here some of his thoughts on other subjects that, each in its own way, have something in common with the theme of this study. For instance, it is of importance that he called himself 'not too much of a Cartesian' (p. 3), a great difference with his rival Doedijns.<sup>65</sup> He joked with the Cartesian doubt and with the French philosopher's criterion of truth 'clair et distinct' (pp. 94, 144). Nor did he forget to memorize his subjugation to the Roman Catholic Church as to an absolute authority (p. 143). He bantered about the pineal gland, the 'place of residence of the soul: 'Does the soul sit, lie, or stand there?' (pp. 45, 94). He realized that Cartesianism had weakened in authority. He made fun of a 'Cartesian dish' to weigh air (p. 162)<sup>66</sup> and rejected Descartes' explanation of the phenomenon of lightning as nonsense (p. 189).<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Already in a resolution of 1660 the States of Utrecht told ministers not to criticize or lecture the government. See for some measures in 1665 Petit L.D., *Bibliotheek van Nederlandsche Pamphletten*, II (The Hague: 1884) no. 3513 and Knuttel W.P.C., *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek*, II-1, no. 9219.

<sup>65</sup> Vliet R. van, *Hendrik Doedijns* (note 7) 17.

<sup>66</sup> See on Descartes' idea on weight for instance *Les principes de la philosophie*, IV, 20–26.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, IV, 89.

Another point: for him comets were not messengers of God's anger, a form of superstition that had already been opposed a decade earlier by Bekker on pastoral grounds and by Bayle on the basis of apologetic motives (p. 45).<sup>68</sup> Neither did he attribute a profound significance to the burning down of a theatre hall, as some Dutch believers still did in the following century by interpreting it as a punishment of God (p. 145).<sup>69</sup>

When Scheveningen was haunted and magic was pointed out in Meurs (Moers) Van Bynkershoek remarked that people in the Republic still believe in ghosts, as a product of 'muddled phantasies', even though the belief in magic has disappeared; in the German lands, on the other hand, this is maintained as a national disease, especially in Catholic regions where people can abandon themselves to it in any degree they choose. Belief in witches and ghosts should disappear altogether, according to Van Bynkershoek, for they both have 'Monsieur Le Diable as their father'. It seems that he would also have liked to abandon belief in the devil, but he was aware that most people could not do without him. After all, they are not adherents of the *Religio Medici*, he said, adding ironically that they needed the devil to chase the children up to bed (p. 92).<sup>70</sup> It is also worth mentioning that Van Bynkershoek saw people who were possessed by the devil as victims of their own 'passions' (p. 68). As may be expected he obstructed the publicity with which quackery was offered (pp. 178–179). Van Bynkershoek was an enlightened man.

---

<sup>68</sup> Cfr. Sluis J. van, "Balthasar Bekker in 1683: kometen, reizen en de vroege Verlichting", *De achttiende eeuw*, 30–II (1998), 125–139. Recently Andrew Fix has contrasted the ideas of Bekker and Bayle on superstition about comets in a different way: for Bayle, he assumes, this was 'a problem of tradition and authority', while Bekker 'believed that the key was to be found in the new cosmology and scientific education'. One would rather expect the reverse. See also Fix A. "Bekker and Bayle on comets", *Geschiedenis van de wijsbegeerte in Nederland. Documentatieblad van de werkgroep Sassen* 11 (2000), 81–96.

<sup>69</sup> Cfr. Buisman J.W., *Tussen vroomheid en Verlichting* (Zwolle: 1992), chapter IV: "De Amsterdamse schouwburgbrand, 1772".

<sup>70</sup> An allusion to *Religio Medici* (1643) by the English physician Sir Thomas Browne, a work that was much read at the time. This inventarization, of mostly philosophical and theological ideas, originally drawn up for private use, also mentioned natural magic performed by women who did not get help from the devil. Cfr. Thijssen-Schoute C.L., *Uit de Republiek der Letteren* (The Hague: 1967) 147. Apparently Van Bynkershoek wanted to say that people who cling to magic cannot imagine that it would work without the devil's help.

*Topical problems at the time*

Perhaps the best way to get to know Van Bynkershoek is to read his opinion on some thorny problems in his time. Thus he showed that monogamous marriage is not an immutable institution, pointing to the practice of the patriarchs and certain passages in Roman law and the Koran (pp. 33–34). Concerning the delicate question if it was allowed to commit suicide, he defended with ‘numerous examples of noble-minded souls’ that generally it is permitted (pp. 68–69).<sup>71</sup> Duelling, Van Bynkershoek thought, was not a crime according to reason or canonical and private law; sometimes it was even inevitable because of rights of honour, even though it had been forbidden at the time (pp. 156–157). He did not see it as a problem if even pagans such as Confucius were called holy, which corresponds to Bayle’s point of view (pp. 22–23). Censorship on books, an instrument of ecclesiastical as well as worldly authorities, he entitled as punishing ‘brains’ and as a foolish measure: booksellers in Leiden knew how much ‘*Libri prohibiti*’ were in demand and they sold them openly. He advised censored authors not to resist and ‘to comply with the time’. This was what Fénelon had done and what Van Bynkershoek himself did. (Letter of farewell ‘To the Mercurial Reader’, pp. 6, 13, 164, 165).<sup>72</sup> He did not have a talent for martyrdom, but evidently he had the courage to take a stand. Sometimes it seems as if it got the better of him, for instance when he coolly equated ‘Fatum’ and ‘Predestination’ (p. 126). His favourite sport is trifling with subjects that are holy to others, and occasionally to himself. Just as well, he joked, that the ashes of burnt heretics are scattered over the rivers: in this way they cannot be turned into snuff that would infect people’s brains (p. 94).

<sup>71</sup> See on this subject Buijs P., “Van zonde naar ziekte: Nederlandse opvattingen over zelfmoord ten tijde van de Verlichting”, *De Gids* (1992) 301–312.

<sup>72</sup> Fénelon’s *Explications* (see note 31), published in 1697, were opposed by Bossuet because of their Quietist ideas. One year later, urged by Louis XIV, Pope Innocent XII condemned twenty-three theses from this work. Fénelon submitted himself to this dictum. See Tüchle H. in: Rogier L.J. e.a. (eds.), *Geschiedenis van de kerk VI* (Hilversum/Antwerp: 1966) 191–193.

*Conclusion*

Thus at the crossroads of religious beliefs in the Low Countries Van Bynkershoek was a representative of the rising Enlightenment, an antipapist, an anticlerical, a jester of all sorts of utterances of piety, who not undeservedly connected the term 'libertinage' with his *Mercur*, a hater of sectarian fragmentation, a man of daring judgements in his time, but not someone who had broken with Christianity. Someone who rejected intolerance, whether this was practised by Rome or by Protestant synods. This rejection that would gather an ever growing number of adherents in the Republic and would be fervently voiced, for instance, in the poem *De Kruiskerk of spiegel van gewetensdwang* (1776) by the poet Pieter Leuter of Rotterdam. All this demonstrates the mentality characteristic of Van Bynkershoek and his enlightened readers. The ghost that had already escaped from the bottle in 1699, would not allow itself to be bottled again in the eighteenth century.

*Selective Bibliography*

- AKASHI K., *Cornelius van Bynkershoek: His Contribution to the Development of International Law* (diss. University of Utrecht 1996).
- BUIJNSTERS P.J., *Nederlandse literatuur van de achttiende eeuw* (Utrecht: 1984).
- ISRAEL J.I., *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford: 2001).
- VLIET R. VAN, *Hendrik Doedijs. De Haagse Mercurius 7 augustus 1697–1 februari 1698* (Leiden: 1996).
- STAR NUMAN O.W., *Cornelis van Bynkershoek: zijn leven en zijne geschriften* (diss. Leiden University: 1869).

*This page intentionally left blank*

L'AME AMANTE DE SON DIEU BY MADAME GUYON (1717):  
PURE LOVE BETWEEN ANTWERP, PARIS AND  
AMSTERDAM, AT THE CROSSROADS OF  
ORTHODOXY AND HETERODOXY<sup>1</sup>

Agnès Guiderdoni-Bruslé

As an example of religious 'intertraffic', I would like to study the adaptation and the edition of two emblem books originally published at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The first is the *Amoris divini emblemata* by the painter Otto van Veen (or Vaenius),<sup>2</sup> and the second, the *Pia desideria* by the Jesuit Herman Hugo,<sup>3</sup> both published in Antwerp, in 1615 and 1624 respectively. This adaptation was published in 1717, in Amsterdam by the printer and bookseller Henricus Wetstein under the title *L'Ame amante de son Dieu*.<sup>4</sup>

Emblem books had been popular since the mid-sixteenth century. The tradition started in Germany, then met a great success in France, and by the end of the century, in the Netherlands. An emblem is a rhetorical composition that associates an image, a text and a title or *motto*, in order to deliver a moral message, or a religious precept, when the book's theme is religious. The image, either obviously symbolic or apparently realistic, must be interpreted according to the text that gives the figurative meaning of the emblem. Sacred emblematics, which began in the last quarter of the sixteenth century in France and the Netherlands,<sup>5</sup> was used by both Catholics and

---

<sup>1</sup> I am most grateful to Elizabeth Wingrove for her patience, her corrections and her invaluable editorial advices.

<sup>2</sup> Otto van Veen (or Vaenius), *Amoris Divini Emblemata* (Antwerp: Martin Nutius – Jean Meurs, 1615), 4<sup>o</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Herman Hugo SJ, *Pia Desideria Emblematis Elegiis & affectibus S.S. Patrum illustrata* (Antwerp: Henri Aertssens, 1624), 8<sup>o</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Guyon J.-M., *L'Ame amante de son Dieu, représentée dans les emblèmes de Hermannus Hugo sur ses Pieux désirs et dans ceux d'Othon Vaenius sur l'Amour Divin, avec des figures nouvelles accompagnées de vers qui en font l'application aux Dispositions les plus essentielles de la vie intérieure* (Cologne: Jean de la Pierre, 1717). This printer's mark is fictitious and in fact hides Wetstein, who was based in Amsterdam and who was a close friend of Poiret.

<sup>5</sup> The first two religious emblem books, where the whole book is entirely and

Protestants (Lutherans and Calvinists) although it might have been used differently, at least in the beginning of the tradition. Under the influence of the Jesuit authors in the Netherlands, these emblem books quickly became meditation books. Some of them had such a success that they soon crossed confessional borders, as the Hugo and Vaenius emblem books did. Adaptations, paraphrases, *contrafacta*, imitations, etc. were customary practices. *L'Ame amante* must be understood within this context of intense circulation and re-interpretation of the emblematic literature. The two original Catholic emblem books were adapted at the beginning of the eighteenth century in France by the mystical Jeanne Marie Guyon (1648–1717), who wrote new poems for the engravings—identical to the two original series. Her adaptation was then edited and published by the Protestant pastor Pierre Poiret (1646–1719), as *L'Ame amante*. This emblem book was part of a larger project that Poiret initiated in 1712, and that consisted in publishing the complete works of Mme Guyon.

From 1704 to 1720, 39 volumes of previously unpublished texts came out of the press of Henricus Wetstein. Let us recall that Mme Guyon was a Roman Catholic, whose life and writings were caught up at the turn of the seventeenth century in the Roman condemnation of quietism.<sup>6</sup> The few works that were published in France during her

---

systematically devoted to apologetics, instruction and meditation, are the *Emblemes, ou Devises Chrestiennes* by Georgette de Montenay (Lyon: 1567) and the *Humanae salutis monumenta* by Benito Arias Montano (Antwerp: 1571). The engraved series of the *Cor Jesu amanti sacrum* by Antoine Wierix (ca. 1586–87) constitutes another step in the emergence of a specific current of sacred emblematics. This series is fully used from 1627, by the Jesuits Etienne Luzvic and Etienne Binet in *Le cœur devot* (Douai-Antwerp: 1627). Finally, the four books by the Jesuit Jan David published in Antwerp from 1601 (*Veridicus Christianus* [1601]; *Typus occasionis* [1603]; *Paradisus Sponsi et Sponsae* [1607]; *Duodecim Specula* [1610]) enriched the field of this literature in initiating a different style.

<sup>6</sup> The *Guia espiritual* (1675) by Molinos was condemned in the 68 propositions of the papal bull *Coelestis pastor*, issued by Innocent X in November 1677. Following this condemnation, many writings were banned and noted down in the Index, such as: in 1687, Antoinette Bourignon; in 1688, Malaval, Falconi, Boudon, Lacombe; in 1689, Benoît de Canfield, Mme Guyon; in 1690, Bernières, Cornand de la Croze (see Le Brun J., “Quiétisme—France”, in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 6 [1986] 2805–42). I cannot discuss here the orthodoxy of Mme Guyon, nor is it in the field of my expertise to do so. But the most recent studies on her spirituality have tried, at least, to reset the perspective and take her out of the ‘hell’ where she had been confined as a sequel to the ‘querelle du quiétisme’.

life had attracted the suspicion of the Church authorities and of the state.<sup>7</sup>

Pierre Poiret as an artisan of this spiritual 'intertraffic' was a many-faceted man. He was born a French protestant and became a pastor in the region of the Rhine. His life was dramatically transformed by his encounter with the writings of Antoinette Bourignon (1616–1680), then with the woman herself in 1676. He spent four years with her until her death, after which he established himself in Amsterdam, and then in Rijnsburg where he remained for more than thirty years. Poiret was a prominent representative of the diversity of the Reformation in the eighteenth-century Netherlands.<sup>8</sup> His major contribution consisted in large-scale editing projects, ranging from medieval mystical texts such as the *Imitation of Jesus-Christ* (that he adapted into a Reformed version under the title *Kempis commun*) and the *Théologie germanique*, to the contemporary mystical writings by Antoinette Bourignon, Mme Guyon, Father La Combe and Fénelon, among others.

Poiret devoted the last fifteen years of his life to editing Mme Guyon's works; the project was completed after his death by Poiret's colleagues. Poiret accomplished a considerable work: not only did he gather copies of Mme Guyon's manuscripts from several sources in different countries, but he also wrote prefaces, set contexts, explicated contents, and highlighted key points of the books. He modified, even added, titles and subtitles, and organised the texts in order to give his collection consistence and coherence.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> As Marjolaine Chevallier puts it: 'Seul un diffuseur protestant, dans un pays aussi tolérant que les Pays-Bas, pouvait réaliser le projet de publier l'ensemble des œuvres d'un auteur à ce point compromis dans une orientation théologique condamnée' (Chevallier M., "Madame Guyon et Pierre Poiret", in *Rencontres autour de la vie et l'œuvre de Madame Guyon, Thonon-les-Bains, 1996* [Grenoble: 1997] 35–49, i.p. 39–40).

<sup>8</sup> See "Pays-Bas", in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 12/1 (1984) 705–89.

<sup>9</sup> The *Opuscules spirituels* appeared first in 1712; this book included two important texts, the *Moyen court et très-facile de faire oraison* (initially published in Grenoble in 1685), and *Les Torrents spirituels*, as well as other minor writings. The subsequent volumes contain only unpublished texts. In the general preface that Poiret wrote to her *Sainte Bible, ou le Vieux et le Nouveau Testament, avec des explications et réflexions qui regardent la vie intérieure*, which appears between 1713 and 1715 in 20 volumes, he indicates that the copies of all the texts of Mme Guyon—still unedited by 1713 and written before 1686—had been sent to him by different correspondents, mainly from Great-Britain. This commentary on the Scriptures was then followed by the *Discours chrétiens et spirituels* in 1716, the *Lettres chrétiennes et spirituelles* in 1717, the

The whole of this editorial enterprise alone could illustrate the interconfessional circulation of European faiths in the Netherlands. Indeed, Poirêt's work embodies the transfer and the spread of the writings by a Catholic mystic among the Huguenot world of the Northern Refuge, and also among the Scottish spiritual circles, 'lecteurs qui constituent une sorte d'internationale de la "vie intérieure"'.<sup>10</sup>

However, *L'Ame amante de son Dieu* is a case in point in understanding how and what has been transmitted from one geographical, historical and religious location to another. The focus will be on this single book, which has been very much neglected by both Poirêt's and Mme Guyon's biographers. First, it enables us to trace some kind of circularity in seventeenth-century European spirituality. This migration started in the Catholic Southern Netherlands and its mystical tradition, which was still alive in Antwerp at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It then moved on to the early spiritual French seventeenth century and ran through to the end of the century where it flourished over again among the 'modern' mystics, as in the writings by Mme Guyon. Finally, it moved back to the Northern Netherlands (and Great-Britain), thanks to people like Pierre Poirêt, who widely diffused the doctrine of Pure Love. For this was essentially what was at the heart of these emblems: Pure Love and its advent in the soul, or rather, the advent of the soul in Pure Love. The circulation of the book gives us then an opportunity to follow the evolution of the mystics from one end of the European century to the other.

In order to understand the link running from the emblems of Vaenius and Hugo to those of Mme Guyon edited by Poirêt, I will present first the two original emblem books (Vaenius and Hugo) and then review the context of the new collection's composition and edit-

---

same year when *L'Ame amante de son Dieu* was published. The *Vie de Mme Guyon par elle-même* and the *Justifications* came out just after his death in 1720, followed by the *Poésies et Cantiques spirituels* in 1722. The works of Mme Guyon continued their travel throughout Europe and were given a new complete edition in Lausanne at the end of the eighteenth century, thanks to the enthusiastic care of the Swiss pastor Jean-Philippe Dutoit (1721–1793). For an up-to-date bibliography of the works by Mme Guyon, see the edition of *Her Life* in Tronc D. I take this opportunity to thank him warmly for his help and his generosity. The name of Mme Guyon was revealed only after her death.

<sup>10</sup> Chevallier M., "Madame Guyon et Pierre Poirêt" (note 7) 90.

ing. The Guyon book itself will further be studied from two points of view: Poiret's interpretation of the book, developed at length in his preface, and the inside view on the emblems themselves, which reveals the mystical metamorphosis undertaken by Mme Guyon.

1. *The Jesuit and the Painter:  
the original emblem books by Vaenius and Hugo*

*L'Âme amante de son Dieu* for the first time brought together two spiritual emblem books; both had been immensely successful during the seventeenth century. The first one was the *Amoris divini emblemata* by the painter Otto van Veen (also known as Vaenius, 1556–1629) and the second was the *Pia desideria* by the Jesuit Herman Hugo (1588–1629). They were both published in Antwerp, in 1615 and 1624 respectively.

*Founding a tradition of Divine Love Emblematics*—Thanks to the quality of the engravings and the texts, the *Amoris divini emblemata* was a turning point in the development of sacred emblematics. The narrative style which organised the collection became prominent and turned the emblem book into a methodical meditation book. Sacred emblematics evolved rapidly with the success of Vaenius's emblems. Among Catholics it laid the foundations for a new emblematic sub-genre, although the iconography itself had emerged from an existing tradition.<sup>11</sup> Herman Hugo's emblem book confirmed and reinforced this development: the diffusion became 'supraconfessional' and the book was as successful in the Netherlands as it was in France, Great-Britain or Germany, to refer only to those countries where it was most popular.

The main features that characterised the emblematic style in both emblem books were narrativity and dramatisation. The main psychological quality was will, as it was understood in the Christian anthropology of the time, i.e. the faculty of the soul where love and charity originated. The emblem collections were increasingly organised around a narrative that told the adventures of two characters,

---

<sup>11</sup> See Knipping J., *Iconography of the Counter-Reformation in the Netherlands. Heaven on Earth* [translation of: *De iconografie van de Contra-Reformatie in de Nederlanden*] 2 vols. (Leiden: 1974), chapter II, especially pp. 96 to 120.

*Anima et Amor Divinus*. These characters allowed for the dramatisation of the spiritual life and the love relationship between the soul and God. The dramatic orientation of the new sub-genre embodied the anthropomorphic representation of the different parts of the soul. The soul's parts were turned into characters who experienced the anxieties and the delights of a profane amorous relationship. Each emblem, as a dramatic nucleus, unveiled a new step of the narrative to the eyes of the meditating reader. In this respect this kind of emblem could be named 'the emblematic of the will' which is obvious in the systematic exploration of the divine love theme.

Mme Guyon's *L'Ame amante de son Dieu* redeployed and renewed these two important and influential works. Even though *L'Ame amante* was part of a long editorial tradition of adaptation and rearrangement, we can agree with Mario Praz that it is 'by far, the most interesting book issued from the book of Hugo'<sup>12</sup> and Vaenius. The *Pia Desideria* and the *Amoris Divini Emblemata* had been the founders of an emblematic sub-genre to which one must add the engraved series of the *Cor Jesus Amanti sacrum* (by Antoine Wierix, c. 1586–87) and the extremely protean series, the *Amoris Divini et Humani Antipathia*, published in Antwerp in 1626. Mme Guyon also wrote new poems for this last series, as we will see further.

The fact that both Vaenius' and Hugo's emblem collections had been adapted by Mme Guyon and brought together by Poiret is now more understandable. As Poiret put it: 'Ils apartiennent [*sic*] visiblement à ce même sujet, duquel ils étalent plus amplement la plus noble partie, qui est celle de l'Amour divin' (15).

Indeed, both emblem books were not without similarities although it would be exaggerated to root Hugo's emblems in Vaenius's. Their main resemblance lies in the engravings that represented Soul and Divine Love as characters. The latter was clearly identified in the first engraving of Vaenius: his name (*Amor Divinus*) was inscribed in his nimbus. In both collections, *Anima* and *Amor Divinus* were two young children who looked very much alike, almost like twins. Each emblem showed one of their 'adventures', a new step in their troublesome relationship that went from the purgation of the sins to the perfect union. Although the internal organisation of the two books

<sup>12</sup> Praz M., *Studies in Seventeenth-century Imagery* (Rome: 1964) 378.

differed, an ascending *itinerarium mentis in Deum* could easily be identified within the narrative structure.

*The Amoris Divini Emblemata* by Vaenius—Each of the sixty original emblems of Vaenius was composed according to the same pattern. Each emblem occupied a double page. The engraving filled the right page while the left page contained the text, divided into three blocks. The upper third consisted of a *motto* followed by several quotations drawn from the Bible and sacred writers; the middle part contained a Spanish epigram, attributed in Vaenius' preface to the mannerist poet Alonso de Ledesma; the lower part had an eight-verse poem in Dutch and in French. The engravings were by Cornelis Boel after the drawings by Vaenius. In his preface to *L'Ame amante*, Poiret described the genesis, the content and the reception of Vaenius' book when it had first been published in 1615; he explained how the Archduchess Isabella had asked Vaenius to transform his profane love emblems, published in 1608, into religious emblems since 'il étoit facile de découvrir et de faire voir dans l'un comme dans l'autre des qualités et des effets semblables' (15–16).

If the emblems of Divine Love were the result of a conversion, a *contrafactum*, they were not a mere 'translation' from the pagan Eros into *Amor Divinus*. The profane source had given the structure, the opportunity and some iconographic models to the emblem book of 1615, but the major part of the 1615 book took some distance from its so-called 1608 'model'. As to the texts, they still retained the *con-cettist* conciseness inspired by the heroic devices or the moral emblems. Because the text did not sustain the narrative, the image took on this role. The emphasis tended to fall on the picture, where the drama took place.

In its original form, the *Amoris Divini Emblemata* had been published again only once in 1660. An undated adaptation was published in Paris by Landry. Poiret mentioned this last edition, which might be an indication that it was still in circulation. Although there were only a few reeditions, the *Amoris Divini Emblemata* had a major influence on the subsequent religious emblem books. Hugo's emblems owed it a great deal.

*The Pia Desideria* by Hugo—In the original Latin edition of Hugo (1624), the emblems of the *Pia Desideria* showed the spiritual progress of the soul in three steps, which were the three parts of the book: 'Gemitus

animae poenitentis', 'Vota animae sanctae' and 'Suspiria animae amantis'. Poiret did not follow the chronological order in his edition (first Hugo, than Vaenius) because he judged that Hugo's book was 'le plus méthodique, et que ses emblèmes regardent particulièrement les ames commençantes' (Preface, 13).

Indeed, the organisation of the soul's progress in three parts of equal length (15 emblems) seemed to induce a methodical meditation. Moreover, the three-fold spiritual progress could be related to a well-known meditative tradition.<sup>13</sup>

The 45 original emblems each consisted of an engraving associated with a biblical quotation, an elegy which expanded on the theme of the quotation and the image, and a prose text, which compiled numerous quotations from spiritual writers. The conceitism of Vaenius' verses had been replaced by the affective outburst and the effusion of the soul, in the *mise en scène* of an intimate relationship between the soul and God. The 'psychology' of the soul was widely investigated with some dramatic demonstrations which brought to light its plain and imperfect humanity. In other words, the meditating reader could follow the progress of the soul on its way to perfection and feel close to the doubts of this soul-sister. The engravings were by Boetius a Bolswert (c. 1580–1633), who had illustrated the emblematic *Via vitae aeternae* by the Jesuit Antoine Sucquet in 1620 and who later on engraved the emblematic vignettes for the *Schola cordis* by the Benedictin Van Haeften in 1629. A French translation of the *Pia Desideria* was anonymously published in 1627 in Antwerp, and another one in 1684 in Paris. It was likely that Mme Guyon had read this 1684 Hugo translation, as well as the undated Parisian edition of Vaenius's emblems, mentioned by Poiret in his preface. As Poiret stressed, the *Pia Desideria* met a huge success.

## 2. The emblems by Mme Guyon

Mme Guyon composed new poems for the two series of original engravings: one series of poems for Hugo's and two series for Vaenius's.

---

<sup>13</sup> The first and most obvious example that comes to the mind is the triple way of Saint Bonaventure, the purgative life, the illuminative life and the unitive life. The progress in Hugo's book generally follows the Bonaventurian way but it is far from strictly applying this method.

In *L'Ame amante*, Poiret put the first Vaenius series in the main body of the book, while he placed the second one afterwards, without images. The overall organisation of the book simplified the structure of the original collections and, although they were still clearly distinct from each other, they shared some obvious homogeneity and formed a very consistent set. The new layout and the format of the engravings were identical for both Hugo's and Vaenius' books: a double page for the poem and the picture. As a consequence, the dramatic and narrative similarities between them were then emphasized. What had been three distinct parts in Hugo's book appeared only in the heading, blurring the methodical movement of the meditation. The material uniformity on the page and the near erasure of the ascending progress of the meditation could be related to Mme Guyon's abstract spiritual paradigms. Instead of Hugo's highly disciplined, charted meditation for beginners, Mme Guyon's emblems offered an affectively saturated contemplation for 'advanced' souls.

*Mme Guyon's interest in emblematics*—It is legitimate to ask why Mme Guyon had all this interest in emblems when the genre was in decline at the end of the seventeenth century. Attempts to answer this question may elucidate part of the mystery of the genesis of these Guyonian emblems, and provide a key to their interpretation.

On December 26, 1695 Mme Guyon was arrested in Paris where she was in hiding, and was imprisoned a few days later in Vincennes. She was then interrogated on nine occasions by lieutenant La Reynie.<sup>14</sup> During the interrogation of April 4, 1696 he questioned her about the books and writings that were seized at her home: profane works, some novels, operas and plays.<sup>15</sup> Mme Guyon admitted that *Griselidis* and *Don Quichotte* were hers and she explained further why she liked especially *Griselidis* and what this kind of literature could bring to a Christian reader. In fact, Mme Guyon found the book to be most '*instructif*', meaning that it could be interpreted in a spiritual way:

<sup>14</sup> The manuscript of these interrogations is kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms n. a. fr. 5250. I have been unable to have access to this document. I then rely on the report in Le Brun J., *Le Pur Amour de Platon à Lacan* (Paris: 2002) 89–90, as well as on its partial publication in "Interrogatoires et procès de Madame Guyon emprisonnée à Vincennes après son arrestation à Popincourt, le 26 décembre 1695. [Papiers de La Reynie, B.N. ms n. a. fr. 5250]", *Documents d'histoire XVII<sup>e</sup>, XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles*, 1 (1910) 97–120 and 457–468.

<sup>15</sup> The interrogation on Mme Guyon's readings is ff. 184r–185v.

[Elle met] en parallèle fiction littéraire et aventure intérieure. [...] L'instruction [désigne] le sens caché, 'mystique', de ces vérités, accessibles seulement à ceux qui savent 'se soumettre' à ce que les œuvres [littéraires, de fiction] émeuvent en eux.<sup>16</sup>

She admitted that she had 'spiritualised' a theatre play, several operas and even a few comedies by Molière 'pour composer des comédies spirituelles.'<sup>17</sup> In this 'spiritual literary' landscape, there is obviously some room for her emblem book: it fit perfectly in the context of her 'instructive' reading:

[...] l'interprétation spirituelle des œuvres littéraires permettait à Mme Guyon de trouver chez les poètes et les romanciers une représentation de l'amour, de ses impossibilités, une mise en scène de l'inceste évité de justesse, mais un amour lié à l'absence de toute récompense, amour qui entraîne le malheur, la persécution de l'être aimé sans retour. Ces traits communs à l'amour romanesque et à l'amour Pure des mystiques pourront être dégagés par l'étude de la figure de Grisélidis [...]. Cette nouvelle [...] met en scène le désir et l'amour, la passion du pâtre et deux conceptions antithétiques de l'amour, l'un désappropriation et intime perte du moi, l'autre désir de forcer les secrets, de posséder, d'obtenir une récompense, d'affirmer le moi.<sup>18</sup>

The *Pia desideria* and the *Amoris divini emblemata*, which were already spiritual and had moreover a narrative quality, lent themselves to this spiritual escalation. From Divine Love emblems, they became emblems of Pure Love. The special interest that Mme Guyon had in the story of Grisélidis helps to understand what the adventures of *Anima* and *Amor Divinus* suggested to her.<sup>19</sup> Grisélidis functioned as a model narrative of the loving soul, while the emblems were the place of expansion and the final spiritual metamorphosis of the fable. The emotion triggered by the fiction allowed the access to the hidden truth: it was the proper definition of the path of the heart, as opposed to the path of reason, which Poiret emphasised in his preface as we shall see. The former only could reach the real—because affective—knowledge of God.

<sup>16</sup> Le Brun J., *Le Pur amour* (note 14) 90.

<sup>17</sup> Le Brun J., *Le Pur amour* (note 14) 90.

<sup>18</sup> Le Brun J., *Le Pur amour* (note 14) 91–92 and 96. On Grisélidis, see pp. 92–105; the primary source of the tale is the short story X, 10 from the *Decameron* by Boccaccio.

<sup>19</sup> She tells also La Reynie: '[...] elle ne souhaiterait point d'avoir d'autres dispositions et qu'elle a désiré que sa volonté fût aussi souple à l'égard de Dieu que l'était Grisélidis à son mari, qui est le prince de Salusse.'

There is substantial uncertainty concerning the date of the poems' composition. However, Mme Guyon's 1696 interrogation (mentioned above) can give us some insight into this matter. Le Brun reports that after La Reynie had questioned her on Griselidis, he interrogated about the emblematic poems:

C'est avec ses préjugés que La Reynie interrogeait Mme Guyon sur les poésies qu'elle avait composées en rapport avec les recueils d'emblèmes. Or elle répondit 'qu'elle aime extrêmement la poésie' (90).

It is usually said that Mme Guyon wrote the poems for the emblems either during her captivity in the Bastille (1698–1703) or in her last years in Blois (1706–1717).<sup>20</sup> The interrogation seemed to indicate an earlier date of composition. From early in her life, she had worshipped the childhood of Jesus and this seemed to have lasted her whole life. The content of the emblems, their focus on the state of childhood and her three introductory poems for the Vaenius emblems all devoted to the Christ Child, suggested that these poems might have been written prior to 1695, during a period of particularly intense devotion to the Christ Child. For example, Cognet says that a year before her 1695 imprisonment, she had instituted 'l'ordre des enfants de l'Enfant-Jésus'.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the interrogation reported that she kept a wax statuette of the Child Jesus, adorned with golden hearts.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the very fact that La Reynie mentioned the poems suggests that they were already in circulation in a manuscript form; there is no trace of an earlier edition.

*The 1717 edition of L'Âme amante*—In a letter dated December 1715, a friend and colleague of Poiret, Otto Homfeld, alluded to these poems, written by Mme Guyon for the images of the *Pia desideria*. Apparently, some copies had already been in circulation for a year and a half among Poiret's Scottish correspondents. The engravings, of which Poiret ordered a new series from Jan Smit, had been slightly

---

<sup>20</sup> See Guerrier L., *Madame Guyon, sa vie, sa doctrine et son influence d'après les écrits originaux et des documents inédits* (Orléans: 1881) 491; Cognet L., "Guyon (Mme)", *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 6 (1967) 1306–36, i.p. 1329 and Chevallier M., *Pierre Poiret 1646–1719. Du protestantisme à la mystique* (Genève: 1994) 100.

<sup>21</sup> Cognet L., "Mme Guyon" (note 20) 1320.

<sup>22</sup> "Interrogatoires et procès de Madame Guyon" (note 14) 114–115 ("2e interrogatoire de Paul Cousturier", 9 janvier 1696).

enlarged but faithful copies of the originals. They were however less precise and refined, especially in the rendering of the faces. In his preface, Poiret boasted of their good quality. These engravings made the book an expensive one, although it met with success. The publication was completed in October 1716 and in mid-December sixty copies of the book were shipped to Scotland.<sup>23</sup>

Not only did Poiret choose to place Hugo's emblems first, disregarding the chronological order of the original emblem books, but he also made other editorial choices, such as keeping or removing different parts of the emblem. For example, he deleted the third part of each of Hugo's emblems, i.e. the prose quotations by the sacred writers. He justified his decision in the preface, explaining that none of the earlier adaptations had used the quotations, and further that these adaptations had all replaced the original elegies by new poems. From his point of view, the essential pieces of the emblems were the images ('les figures'), the quotations from the Bible (which were like the *mottoes* of each emblem) and the poems. He was also worried about the physical weight of the volume, which is why he added the second series of poems for the Vaenius emblems at the end of the volume, without the engravings: 'rendre par ce moyen le livre plus commode et plus portatif'. It was also a way to lower the price of the book.

Finally, in *L'Ame amante* the identity of the author was only hinted at. Poiret only indicated that it was the same author who had written the exegesis of the Scriptures that he had published two years earlier. The name of Mme Guyon was revealed only in the second full edition of her work at the end of the eighteenth century by the Swiss pastor Jean-Philippe Dutoit.

*The later editions of Mme Guyon's emblem books*—The book was republished with minor changes in Utrecht in 1750, after which appeared the Dutoit edition in Lausanne. He used Poiret's entire preface, adding only the identification of the author.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See Chevallier M., *Pierre Poiret* (note 20) 100.

<sup>24</sup> However, he made some noticeable changes to the layout of the emblems. The engravings were positioned four by four on one plate, with no obvious correspondence to the poems. Thus the structure of the emblem was completely dismembered. After the *Pia desideria* and the *Amoris divini emblemata*, Dutoit added the emblem collection of the *Effets de l'amour divin et humain*, which had been initially published in the fourth volume of the *Poésies et cantiques spirituels*. These *Effets* were

Guyon's book was also translated into German in 1719 and 1743. The engravings were of a very poor quality, though still faithful copies of the originals; the translation itself was as close as possible to the original, including Poiret's preface. An emblem book by Jan Suderman published in Amsterdam in 1724 by Wetstein was often taken for a Dutch version of *L'Âme amante*.<sup>25</sup> However, while Wetstein used the same engravings and brought together the same books by Hugo and Vaenius, the verses were Suderman's; they were not a Dutch translation of Mme Guyon's.

### 3. *The emblem as the path of the heart toward Pure Love*

Mme Guyon was certainly not the first 'mystic encounter' of Poiret. On the contrary, she appeared at the end of his life, a life that was passionately devoted to the diffusion of mystic texts and to the defense of mystic theology as the only mode to apprehend the divinity. On this point, Poiret was in perfect harmony with Mme Guyon, although the latter one expressed her conviction in a different way. Only the path of the heart, beyond reason and thought, would lead to the transformation of the soul into Pure Love.

*Poiret, Mysticism and the Emblems*—Poiret's *Bibliotheca mysticorum*, which was first published in French in 1700 and in Latin in 1708, could be used as a convenient summary of Poiret's interest in mysticism. After briefly expounding on mystical theology, Poiret drew up an extensive bibliography of the mystic writings from Tauler to Antoinette

---

new poems by Mme Guyon for the images of the *Amoris Divini et Humani Antipathia*. It is remarkable how Dutoit managed to gather the corpus of divine love emblematics at the end of the eighteenth century—a time where it had lost nearly all significance in most part of Europe.

<sup>25</sup> *De Godlievende Ziel vertoont in Zinnebeelden door Herman Hugo en Otto van Veen met dichtkunstige verklaringen van Jan Suderman* (Amsterdam, Henrik Wetstein, 1724) (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books printed in the Low Countries. 1542–1813. A Bibliography* [Utrecht: 1988] 771). Reedition in Amsterdam: Balthasar Lakeman, 1727) (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books*, 772). Other editions: Amsterdam: Jacob and Nicolaas Verheyde, 1736 (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books*, 773); Amsterdam: Jacob and Nicolaas Verheyde, 1737 (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books*, 774); Utrecht: Herman and Johan Besseling, 1749 (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books*, 775). This last edition has the same title as the Köln, Jean de La Pierre edition (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books*, 262), which increased the confusion between the two works. See also Porteman K., *Inleiding tot de Nederlandse emblemataliteratuur* (Groningen: 1977) 149.

Bourignon. This bibliography, entitled 'Letter on the principles and features of the mystics', was divided into twelve chapters;<sup>26</sup> each chapter was devoted to a specific feature of mysticism and to a prominent character associated with each feature. As such the work functioned as an annotated bibliography that included extensive commentaries. More than half of the authors were modern mystics; the bibliography was not ordered chronologically. Significantly, it ended with Antoinette Bourignon, as the final figure in an illustrious lineage of mystics, which were divided in twelve groups, like the twelve tribes of Israel. Mme Guyon was found in the chapter of the *Evangelic Pearl*, which represented the mystical model for 'the presence of God as an experience.' Poiret mentioned the publication of Guyon's *Moyen court et très-facile* as well as her commentary on the *Song of Songs*. The final part of the volume was a 'catalogue' or alphabetical index of mystical writers. We find here the name of Herman Hugo, dubbed 'mysticus emblematicus' and poet. Given that Vaenius was not included in this list, Poiret surely referred to the original emblem book (or one of its numerous re-editions), and not to Mme Guyon's adaptation. This indicates how influential Hugo's emblem book was. A book of meditation, written by a Jesuit and published nearly a century before Poiret's *Bibliotheca*, obviously had been assimilated into the various circles of the Reformed spirituality, into the 'Chrétiens de l'intérieur'. While in its 1662 classification of religious emblem books, the Jesuit Menestrier had described the *Pia desideria* as showing the 'progrès de la vie mystique', the same word—'mystique'—used by Poiret in the context of the *Bibliotheca mysticorum* acquired a specific connotation, if not a new denotation.<sup>27</sup> Whereas Menestrier

---

<sup>26</sup> Tauler: Character fundi; Harpius: Character gradationum per mortes et vitas; John of the Cross: Character puritatis ad unionem; Saint Theresa: Character affectuosae Orationis; Saint Catherine of Genoa: Character Amoris puri; Angela of Foligno: Character Crucis Christi; Benoît de Canfeld: Character voluntatis Dei; Engelbert: Character simplicitatis; SS. Hildegarde, Elisabeth, Mechtild, Brigitte: Character Revelationis ac Prophetiae; Boehm: Character radicalis; Hiel: Character interioritatis; D.G. 'Anonymus Belga' [identified in the catalogue as David Georgius]: Character divini timoris; the *Evangelic Pearl*: Character praesentiae Dei, cum praxi; Antoinette Bourignon: Character Renovationis Spiritus Evangelici.

<sup>27</sup> For the evolution of the word 'mystic' and the constitution of a new and autonomous discipline, see Certeau M. de, *La Fable Mystique* (Paris: 1982). It would be instructive to follow up the enquiry about the use of the word in Poiret's writings; it would probably reveal a new shift, parting from the—already new—meaning it had acquired at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

referred to the spiritual life in general, Poiret incorporated Hugo into a proper mystical tradition that he partly reconstructed in his catalogue, a tradition that dealt with the highest spiritual states of the soul reaching the mystery of God. The conversion of the word '*mystique*', from 'spiritual' to 'mystical', if one may say, had been fully achieved in the emblems by Mme Guyon. As Poiret expressed at the outset of *L'Âme amante*, these were emblems of Pure Love, in which Poiret equated to 'mystical'. In a long preface, Poiret introduced the reader to emblematic literature, to the source works, and above all, to 'la voie du cœur [...] beaucoup meilleure que celle de la speculation.'<sup>28</sup> What could be called his emblematic 'commitment' was remarkable.<sup>29</sup> Not only did his preface present the edition, but it also offered a justification of the emblem book as a conversion tool to Pure Love and, indeed as the highest of it. Reproducing a traditional argumentation on the subject, he linked the emblem to the analogical rhetorical devices from the Scriptures:

Combien de fois Jesus-Christ & ses saints Apôtres ne se sont-ils point servis d'Emblèmes & de similitudes tirées des choses naturelles, artificielles, [...] pour de là élever nos esprits & nos cœurs à la considération & à l'amour des choses de l'esprit, du ciel & de l'éternité? Les exemples s'en présentent en foule dans la S. Ecriture. (7)

---

<sup>28</sup> Here is the table of content: 1-4. L'usage des choses extérieures, visibles & emblématiques pour s'en élever aux choses invisibles & intérieures, est d'institution divine, est facile, agreable, & proportionné à la capacité de tous. Plusieurs exemples de son utilité. 5-7 Les Emblèmes qui vont agir sur le cœur sont préférables à ceux qui ne reveillent que l'esprit, la voie du cœur étant beaucoup meilleure que celle de la speculation, selon la parole de Dieu même. 8-9 Quelques particularités sur les Emblèmes du P. Hugo et de Vaenius, leur sujet, & diverses de leurs Editions précédentes [sic]. 10-12 Touchant cette nouvelle Edition, les vers nouveaux qui y sont insérés, & leur caractère, qui est celui du Pur Amour de Dieu. Excellence de cette voie de l'Amour, recommandable par plusieurs exemples de l'Écriture & de ces derniers siècles. 13 Dispositions requises pour bien profiter de ce Livre.

<sup>29</sup> He may be the first one to justify from a spiritual point of view the iconography of the emblems: 'On souhaite à ceux qui voudront faire un bon usage de ce livre, la disposition d'ame qui est necessairement requise à cet effet. Elle est clairement dépeinte dans toutes les figures de ces Emblèmes sous la forme d'un enfant, ce qui marque que l'ame qui veut entrer & persévérer dans la communication avec Dieu & son divin Amour, doit être douée des aimables & enfantines qualités d'innocence, de simplicité, de pureté, de désappropriation, de candeur, de bénignité, de docilité & de flexibilité à se laisser conduire & gouverner à Dieu comme un petit enfant [...]' (23).

Given man's sinful nature and his propensity to live 'outside himself', God had to resort to sensible things—'le sensible et le visible'—in order to reach man's inner self (5–6). These things—images, similitudes, emblems, etc.—, which were only figurative, lead man to 'l'invisible et le spirituel.' Thus 'les deux ouvrages de ce livre' were among these 'means' that God used to entice the soul toward the Good.<sup>30</sup> In this view, the emblem was a conversion tool whose archetypal design had been conceived by God himself, and whose action was affective:

Il est à croire que c'est par de semblables considérations & à dessein de procurer quelque utilité salutaire à toutes sortes de personnes, que l'on a vu paroître de fois à autres [sic] des livres d'emblèmes spirituels qui sous le voile de diverses figures essaient pieusement de tourner nos ames vers Dieu, les uns en nous imprimant à l'esprit certaines idées ou considérations qui nous menent à penser à lui, les autres en réveillant dans notre cœur des mouvemens affectifs qui nous portent à l'aimer & à rechercher saintement son union & sa possession parfaite & éternelle, méthode [sic] qui est incomparablement préférable à celle de la simple spéculation, bien que contre l'opinion de la plupart des personnes d'étude, qui méprisant la voie du cœur, se persuadent mais bien vainement, que par la voie d'un esprit sec, par employer & épuiser toute son activité & toutes les forces de sa raison en idées & en raisonnemens sur les choses divines, ils pourront mieux trouver Dieu, que par la voie d'exercer notre cœur dans son divin Amour. (9)

According to Poiret, this path of the heart found its expression in the emblems through the association of the images (as the visible sign) with the spiritual words in the verses of Mme Guyon. He even judged that she did better than her predecessors: 'elle a surpassé bien souvent le dessein et les pensées de nos deux Auteurs sur la plupart de leurs propres Emblèmes'. (17)

This path was the only one for those who wanted to reach Pure Love; the emblem book of Mme Guyon was both the quest for and the exploration of Pure Love. She opened her book with these words: 'Quoique ma langue soit muette / Le langage du cœur jusques à vous parvient' (Dedication to Jesus, 1). This went together with the usual anti-intellectualism, where reason and intelligence were deprecated, in comparison to the mystical potentialities of will, or love. Poiret aptly summed up what these *new* emblems conveyed:

<sup>30</sup> 'Et c'est la même voie & la même chose qu'ont eu dessein de nous recommander les auteurs des Emblèmes suivans' (13).

C'est à de semblables opérations de l'Amour Divin tout noble & généreux, tout Pure & desintéressé, & qui ne regarde que Dieu Seul, son vrai & son unique objet, son motif, sa fin & son tout, que reviennent les Explications sublimes qu'on a données aux Emblèmes suivans dans les vers qui y sont annexés, qui semblent n'être que d'ardentes effusions d'un cœur tout animé & agi de l'Amour de Dieu le plus Pure, & des élévations presque continuelles de ce même cœur à Dieu. (21)

*Transformation of the original emblems*—Mme Guyon transformed the 'spiritual' emblems of Hugo and Vaenius into 'mystical' emblems, as a few examples will demonstrate. The first emblem of Hugo (I:1) showed the straying soul in the night, complaining about its miserable life, far from the face of God, exiled to the region of sin and darkness. In Mme Guyon's, the night became the place of the redeemed soul's dawn. We can oppose Hugo's verses:

Une nuit trop épaisse, une nuit trop horrible,  
Fascheuse, longue, affreuz, effroyable & terrible:  
Nuit qui meriteroit qu'en poizant le compas  
Pour mesurer le temps, on ne la marquast pas.<sup>31</sup>

To these Guyonian verses, reminding of Saint John of the Cross:<sup>32</sup>

Il est une autre nuit; mais nuit toute divine;  
Il ne paroît ni lampe, ni flambeau;  
C'est l'Amour le plus Pure qui lui-même illumine,  
Et nous donne un état nouveau.<sup>33</sup>

In the emblem II:21, the kneeling soul presented its heart to *Amor divinus*; this heart was reflected in a mirror in the shape of the Tablets of the Law, held by Divine Love. The poem in Hugo's book expanded on the mirror-related theme of make-up and vanity of physical appearance, while Mme Guyon stressed the offering of the heart, which was lost in God forever, in accordance with the notion of Pure Love. Whereas Hugo wrote:

Je vous presente un cœur sans tache.  
Que le moindre traict, qui vous fasche,  
En soit arraché pour jamais.

<sup>31</sup> Hugo H. SJ, *Pieux desirs, imités des latins [sic] du R.P. Hermann Hugo, par P.I., mis en lumière par Boèce a Bolsvert*. (Anvers: 1627) 3.

<sup>32</sup> See Baruzi J., *Saint Jean de la Croix et le problème de l'expérience mystique* (Paris: 1924, 449–454).

<sup>33</sup> Guyon J.-M., *L'Âme amante* (note 4) 2.

Et que de point en point je garde  
 Vos saintes loix, que je regarde.  
 En cet estat, o cher espoux,  
 Je m'estimeray bien-heureuse;  
 Autant aymable qu'amoureuse [. . .].<sup>34</sup>

Mme Guyon went further and reached the union with God:

Ah, recevez mon cœur, je n'en veux plus d'usage,  
 Si ce n'est, mon Seigneur, afin de vous aimez [. . .]  
 Mon cœur soit toujours en vos mains:  
 Consuisez le, Bonté suprême:  
 Faites plus, perdez le en vous même.  
 Qu'il n'en sorte jamais, que je le cherche en vain,  
 Qu'il soit tout caché de ma vue,  
 Abimé dans l'Essence nue [. . .].<sup>35</sup>

The same twist took place with the Vaenius emblems, although it was more pronounced in the second set of poems, which bore a stronger mystical mark. In Vaenius' book, the emblem 11, 'In Unitate Perfectio' stressed the unity of God and recalled the first commandment: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'

Comme d'un, le nombre se tire  
 Et se forme la quantité,  
 Aussi quand apres on desire  
 De retourner a l'unité,  
 Il faut que les nombres on oste;  
 Ainsi pour nous rejoindre à Dieu,  
 Nous devons d'une Amour devote  
 A lui seul consacrer le vœu.<sup>36</sup>

The main subject of the following first-series poem of Mme Guyon was still devoted to the unity of God, although one could see a slight shift from unity to union:

En Dieu toutes choses sont unes,  
 Il n'est rien hors de lui que la division,  
 Que troubles, qu'infortunes;  
 Le calme & le bonheur ne sont qu'en l'Union.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Hugo H. SJ, *Pieux désirs* (note 31) 321.

<sup>35</sup> Guyon J.-M., *L'Ame amante* (note 4) 22.

<sup>36</sup> Veen O. Van, *Amoris Divini Emblemata* (note 2) 28.

<sup>37</sup> Guyon J.-M., *L'Ame amante* (note 4) 67.

This shift was fully confirmed and asserted in the second-series poem, where the emblem had become the emblem of the union with God:

La fin de l'Amour Pure est l'union intime, [. . .]  
 Admirable union de Dieu, de l'ame amante!  
 Il s'en fait à la fin un mélange divin.  
 L'ame sans rien avoir est ferme, elle est contente,  
 L'Amour la transformant en son Bien souverain.<sup>38</sup>

Pure Love, or disinterested love, as such was not a new notion, but it acquired a particular depth in France at the end of the seventeenth century, in the context of the quietism controversy. In the study that Jacques Le Brun has recently devoted to this matter, he observed that it was a specific aspect of French quietism. He also emphasized the near impossibility to build a rational 'system' of this notion. In order to review its various aspects, he used historical 'figures' who could exemplify or even embody the notion itself. Mme Guyon was then a 'figure' of Pure Love into what he called a diachronic 'configuration'.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, Pure Love was a notion that defied reason and logic because, when it 'happened', it did so beyond the intellect and even the conscience. In a way, Pure Love was God himself, therefore, an undefinable thing. This undefinability was enclosed in the structure of *L'ame amante de son Dieu*: the figurative compositions of the loving Mme Guyon (her poems) reflected the Love emblematic figure, which could only emerge as a figure of 'speech'. Outlining a configuration of Pure Love by way of setting a number of 'figures' in play was the way the emblem book worked. The symbolism of the emblems sketched, stroke by stroke, a figure of Pure Love, which was in essence 'infigurable'.

This could explain the emblematic 'commitment' of Poiret into editing the book. The emblems were the path of the heart to God because of their ability to convey this abstract and ineffable notion, but also because they embodied, in their functioning, the 'veiled'—figurative—relationship between the soul and God in this life.

What Mme Guyon actually took from Hugo and Vaenius were the images and the mystical hints that suffused their poetry. She expanded the love theme in the poems and reinterpreted the engravings. In

<sup>38</sup> Guyon J.-M., *L'Âme amante* (note 4) 130.

<sup>39</sup> Le Brun J., *Le Pur amour* (note 14) 13–15.

this view, she gave us one of the most perfect examples of what an emblem was and what it offered to its reader. Her re-writing of these earlier emblems, then re-arranged by Poiret seems to conform to the definition that Daniel Russell gave of an emblematic image:

An emblematic image [is] one that can be detached from its setting with no loss of meaning to the argument it is illustrating.

[. . .] The emblematic image is a detachable, ornamental image, but by the very fact that it can stand alone, detached from the development it is intended to support and illuminate, it is also independent from that development, and provides an open field for the free association of the reader. It is no longer held captive by its *signifié*, and as if absorbed by it. Such an image makes room for a more independent and active role for the reader [. . .].<sup>40</sup>

The fact that this originally Catholic book was successful among Protestants demonstrates all the more the aptitude of the emblem to fit in different spiritual contexts, allowing for continuing interpretations. However, the transmission of the Hugo and Vaenius emblems also reveals the paradoxical status of this 'detachable' image. That it is open to the reader's subjective interpretation is in fact a consequence of the circulating pattern I have been retracing. In this way, the emblem's detachability is made possible by national, spiritual and cultural contingency. Thus one might say that the intertextual complexity within *L'Ame amante* reflects the multiple exchanges of persons, personalities and interpretative communities that produced the book itself.

---

<sup>40</sup> Russell D., *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture* (Toronto: 1995) 5 and 7.

### Selective Bibliography

#### 1. The editions of *L'Âme amante de son Dieu*

##### a. Main sources

- LANDWEHR J., *German Emblem Books 1531–1888. A Bibliography* (Utrecht-Leyden: 1972).  
 —, *Emblem and Fable Books printed in the Low Countries. 1542–1813. A Bibliography* (Utrecht: 1988).  
 PRAZ M., *Studies in seventeenth century imagery. Bibliography* (Rome: 1964).

##### b. Editions in French

- Cologne: Jean de la Pierre, 1717 [Amsterdam: 1717] (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books*, 261).  
 – Utrecht: Herm. and Joh. Besseling, 1750 (Landwehr J., *Emblem and Fable Books*, 262: ‘a few changes: title-print with Dutch text and publisher’s address. At the end: avis au Relieur [...]’).  
 – Paris [Lausanne]: Les Libraires associés, 1790 (Praz M., *Studies*, 378).

##### c. Editions in German

- H. Hugo, *Die ihren Gott liebende Seele, vorgestellt in den Sinnbilder über seine Pia Desideria, und O. Venü [sic] über die Liebe Gottes, mit Versen* (Regensburg: 1719) (Praz M., *Studies*, 378).  
 – *Die ihren Gott liebende Seele, vorgestellt in den Sinnbildern des Hermann Hugonis über seine Pia desideria, und des Ottonis Vaenü, über die Liebe Gottes, mit neuen Kupffern und Versen, welche zielen auf das innere Christenthum, aus dem Frantzösischen ins Teutsche übersetzt* (Regensburg: Emerich Felix Bader, 1743) (Landwehr J., *German emblem books*, 371).

#### 2. Secondary Bibliography

- BARUZI J., *Saint Jean de la Croix et le problème de l'expérience mystique* (Paris: 1924).  
 BRÉBEUF G. de, *Entretiens solitaires*, ed. R. Harmand (Paris: 1912).  
 BREMOND H., *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France depuis la fin des guerres de religion jusqu'à nos jours*, 10 vols (Paris: 1967–1968).  
 CHEVALLIER M., “Madame Guyon et Pierre Poiret”, in *Rencontres autour de la vie et l'œuvre de Madame Guyon, Thonon-les-Bains, 1996* (Grenoble: 1997) 35–49.  
 —, *Pierre Poiret 1646–1719. Du protestantisme à la mystique* (Genève: 1994).  
 —, “Poiret, Pierre”, in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 12/2 (1985) 1831–35.  
 COGNET L., “Guyon (Mme)”, *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 6 (1967) 1306–36.  
 —, “La spiritualité de Madame Guyon”, *XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* 12–13–14 (1951–52) 269–75.  
 GONDAL M.-L., *Madame Guyon (1648–1717), un nouveau visage* (Paris: 1989).  
 GUERRIER L., *Madame Guyon, sa vie, sa doctrine et son influence d'après les écrits originaux et des documents inédits* (Orléans: 1881).  
 GUYON J.-M., *L'Âme amante de son Dieu, représentée dans les emblèmes de Hermannus Hugo sur ses “Pieux désirs” et dans ceux d'Othon Venius sur l'Amour Divin, avec des figures nouvelles accompagnées de vers qui en font l'application aux Dispositions les plus essentielles de la vie intérieure* (Cologne: 1717).  
 —, *La Vie par elle-même et autres écrits biographiques*, ed. D. Tronc – A. Villard (Paris: 2001).  
 HUGO H. SJ, *Pia Desideria Emblematis Elegiis & affectibus S.S. Patrum illustrata* (Anvers: 1624).  
 —, *Pieux désirs, imités des latins [sic] du R.P. Hermann Hugo, par P.I., mis en lumière par Boëce a Bolswert* (Anvers: 1627).

- “Interrogatoires et procès de Madame Guyon emprisonnée à Vincennes après son arrestation à Popincourt, le 26 décembre 1695. [Papiers de La Reynie, B.N. ms n. a. fr. 5250]”, *Documents d'histoire XVII<sup>e</sup>, XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles*, 1 (1910) 97–120 and 457–468.
- LE BRUN J., “Madame Guyon et la Bible”, in *Rencontres autour de la vie et l'œuvre de Madame Guyon, Thonon-les-Bains, 1996* (Grenoble: 1997) 63–82.
- , *Le Pur Amour de Platon à Lacan* (Paris: 2002).
- , “Quétisme—France”, in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 6 (1986) 2805–42.
- “Pays-Bas”, in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 12/1 (1984) 705–89.
- POIRET P., *Bibliotheca mysticorum selecta* (Amsterdam: [1708]).
- PRAZ M., *Studies in Seventeenth-century Imagery* (Rome: 1964).
- RUSSELL D., *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture* (Toronto: 1995).
- TRONC D., “Une filiation mystique: Chrysostome de Saint-Lo, Jean de Bernières, Jacques Bertot, Jeanne-Marie Guyon”, *XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* 55 (2003).
- VEEN O. VAN, *Amoris Divini Emblemata* (Anvers: 1615).
- WEBER B., “Piétisme”, *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire* 12/2 (1985) 1744–58.

## NOTES ON THE EDITORS OF THIS VOLUME

ARIE JAN GELDERBLOM (Ph.D. Utrecht 1991) is Associate Professor of Early Modern Dutch literature in Utrecht University, the Netherlands. His research and publications focus on the cultural analysis of colonial texts, word-image relationships and topographical poetry. He lectured in universities in France, Poland, South-Africa and Indonesia. During Fall Term 2003–2004 Gelderblom was Erasmus Lecturer on the History and Civilization of the Netherlands and Flanders at Harvard University.

JAN L. DE JONG, Ph.D. (1987) in Art History, Leiden University, is Assistant Professor of Italian Renaissance Art at Groningen University, The Netherlands. He has published extensively on sixteenth century painting in Italy.

MARC VAN VAECK, Ph.D. (1994) is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Literature at the University of Leuven. Publications on sixteenth and seventeenth century Dutch literature, and Dutch emblem literature. Since 2001 he is also editor of *Spiegel der Letteren. Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Literatuurgeschiedenis en voor Literatuurwetenschap*.

*This page intentionally left blank*

## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

PAUL ARBLASTER, Ph.D. (2000), University of Oxford, is currently a research associate in the Department of Literature at the University of Leuven and is seeking paid academic employment. He has published on various aspects of early-modern press history, monastic history, translation, and literary responses to persecution. His book on Richard Verstegan will shortly be appearing from Leuven University Press.

PIETA VAN BEEK, Ph.D. (1997) in Classics, University of Stellenbosch, is Research Associate at Stellenbosch University. She publishes on the learned Anna Maria van Schurman, including *Klein werk: de Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, Stellenbosch University, 1997 ([www.dbnl.org](http://www.dbnl.org)).

RALPH DEKONINCK, Ph.D. (2001) in History of Art, Université Catholique de Louvain, is researcher at the National Fund for Scientific Research and Professor of Art History at the Catholic University of Louvain. He has published on Jesuit book illustration (Droz, 2004, to be published) and on the problem of idolatry during the modern times.

AGNÈS GUIDERDONI-BRUSLÉ, Doctorate in French Literature (2002), University Paris IV-Sorbonne/K.U. Leuven, has a postdoctoral appointment in the Department of Literature at the University of Leuven. Her main field of research and publication is symbolic and emblematic literature (16th–17th c.).

JASON HARRIS is Research Fellow in Irish Neo-Latin at the Centre for Neo-Latin Studies in Cork. He has recently submitted his Ph.D. thesis in Trinity College Dublin on the topic of Abraham Ortelius and Flemish humanism.

CHRISTINE KOOI, Ph.D. (1993) in History, Yale University, is Associate Professor of History at Louisiana State University. She is the author of *Liberty and Religion: Church and State in Leiden's Reformation, 1572–1620* (Brill, 2000) and is currently working on a study of Catholic-Protestant relations in Holland during the seventeenth century.

JEANINE DE LANDTSHEER, Ph.D. in Classical Languages (1993), Research Fellow at the Catholic University of Leuven, focuses on Neo-Latin studies, more particularly on Justus Lipsius, and is editor of his correspondence, of which a new part, *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, VIII (1595) is forthcoming in 2004. In this same year a book on Lipsius's *Divae* treatises will appear, including the annotated editio princeps and translation of his *Diva Virgo Lovaniensis*.

FRED VAN LIEBURG, Ph.D. (1996) in History, Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, is Lecturer of Early Modern History and Co-Director of ReLiC, the VU Centre for Dutch Religious History. He has published extensively on topics in the history of Protestantism such as the Reformed clergy, Pietist autobiography, and religious story-telling.

GUIDO MARNEF, Ph.D. (1991) in History, Catholic University Leuven, is Associate Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Antwerp. He has published extensively on Reformation and Revolt in the Low Countries, including *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation. Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis, 1550–1577* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U.P., 1996).

MIA M. MOCHIZUKI, Ph.D. (Yale University, 2001) is Lecturer in Art History at Columbia University. She has published articles on iconoclasm and the export of style in the early modern world. Her book on the Dutch Reformed Church is forthcoming.

HENK VAN NIEROP received his Ph.D. degree at Leiden in 1984. He is Professor of Early Modern History at the Universiteit van Amsterdam and publishes on the Revolt of the Netherlands and the Dutch Golden Age, including *The Nobility of Holland: From Knights to Regents* (1993) and *Het verraad van het Noorderkwartier. Oorlog, terreur en recht in de Nederlandse Opstand* (1999).

CHARLES H. PARKER, Ph.D. (1993) in History, University of Minnesota, is Associate Professor of History at Saint Louis University. He has published on poor relief and discipline in the Netherlands including *The Reformation of Community: Social Welfare and Calvinist Charity in Holland, 1572–1620*.

JACONELLE SCHUFFEL, M.A. (1998) in Comparative Art Studies, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, is a Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Arts at the same university. She is working on a thesis on Reformed homiletics and sermons in the 17th and early 18th century Dutch Republic.

JAN J.V.M. DE VET, Ph.D. (1980) in History, Catholic University Nijmegen, was professor of cultural history at the Pierre Bayle Institute of this university before his retirement. He has published on Dutch and French journals of learning, Cartesianism, Spinozism, the Enlightenment and 18th century literature.

*This page intentionally left blank*

## INDEX NOMINUM

- Achtenhoven, Adrianus, 193  
 Acontius, Jacobus, 5, 111, 135  
 Acquaviva, Claudio, 74 n. 36, 84, 88  
 Adam, M., 209 n. 21  
 Aertssens, Henri, 297 n. 3  
 Aitzema, Lieuwe van, 280  
 Akerboom, 190  
 Albert of Austria, Archduke, 66, 66  
     n. 4, 68, 68 n. 13, 73 n. 35, 75  
     n. 47, 80 n. 64, 82 n. 73, 86  
     n. 92, 88, 128  
 Aldobrandini, Cinzio, 84  
 Alexander VI  
     Pope (Rodrigo Borgia), 288  
 Alexander VIII  
     Pope (Pietro Ottoboni), 281 n. 40  
 Allen, William, 67 n. 6  
 Alsted, Johann Heinrich, 240  
 Alva (Fernando Álvarez de Toledo)  
     Duke of Alva, 2, 4, 33–35, 35 n. 7,  
     36, 112, 116–117, 255  
 Alvarez, Baltasar, 60  
 Amandi, Martin, 177  
 Amesius, Guilielmus, 231, 231 n. 22,  
     234, 236, 244  
 Ampzing, Samuel, 173, 176  
 Anel, van, 186 n. 28  
 Aneau, Barthélemy, 49  
 Aquinas, Thomas, 27  
 Arias Montano, Benito, 2, 90, 91 n. 4,  
     94, 117, 139, 298 n. 5  
 Aristophanes, 286  
 Arnold, G., 255 n. 32, 260 n. 55, 262  
     n. 63, 264  
 Ascham, Roger, 10 n. 4  
 Atticus, Bishop, 213  
 Augustine, St, 7, 76 n. 52, 222–223,  
     224, 226, 230, 244, 251  
  
 Bader, Emerich Felix, 317  
 Baronio, Cardinal, 289 n. 61  
 Barre, P. (O.S.A.), 184 n. 23  
 Barrefelt, Hendrik Jansen van, 4,  
     49, 52, 52 n. 11, 53, 53 n. 12,  
     54–56, 56 nn. 21–22, 57–59, 60  
     n. 34, 61–62, 64, 91 n. 4, 92–94,  
     104–105, 118 n. 76, 124–125, 133,  
     135–138, 310 n. 26  
 Barwick, William, 208  
 Batman, J., 199 n. 6, 209 n. 22  
 Baudius, Dominicus, 84 n. 81  
 Bayle, Pierre, 292, 292 n. 68, 293  
 Beard, Th., 199 n. 6, 209 n. 22  
 Beeck, Adriaan van, 184 n. 17  
 Bekker, Balthasar, 202–203, 208, 217,  
     277, 277 n. 28, 282, 282 n. 45, 283,  
     283 n. 47, 292, 292 n. 68  
 Berghen, Adriaen van, 12–14, 16–17  
 Berghes, Guillaume de, 74–75  
 Bernardus of Clairvaux, 83  
 Bernières, Jean de, 298 n. 6, 300 n. 9,  
     318  
 Bertot, Jacques, 300 n. 9, 318  
 Besseling, Herman and Johan, 309  
     n. 25, 317  
 Beukelsz., Jan, 286 n. 55  
 Beverland, Adriaen, 286, 287 n. 56  
 Binet, Etienne, 298 n. 5  
 Bizarus, Petrus, 119  
 Boccaccio, Giovanni, 306 n. 18  
 Bochius, Joannes, 122  
 Boekholt, Johannes, 197 n. 2  
 Boel, Cornelis, 303  
 Bogardus, Johannes, 86 n. 92  
 Böhme, Jakob, 57 n. 22, 310 n. 26  
 Boileau, Nicolas, 277  
 Boleyn, Anne, 11  
 Bolswert, Boetius a, 304, 313 n. 31,  
     317  
 Bonaventure, St, 304 n. 13  
 Bonhomme, Macé, 49, 49 n. 2  
 Borcht, Pieter van der, 52, 55, 56  
     n. 22, 57–59, 59 n. 33, 62, 64  
 Bosch, Jacobus, 204 n. 15  
 Bossche, Anna van den, 186  
 Bossuet, Jacques-Bénigne, 293 n. 72  
 Boudon, 298 n. 6  
 Bourignon, Antoinette, 57 n. 22, 298  
     n. 6, 299, 310, 310 n. 26  
 Brébeuf, Georges de, 317  
 Breugel, Willem, 67  
 Brouchoven, Foy van, 170  
 Browne, Thomas, 292 n. 70  
 Brucioli, Antonio, 22, 27  
 Brunel, Olivier, 96 n. 17  
 Bruyn, Nicolaas de, 70–71

- Buchelius, Arnoldus, 176  
 Buecken, Martinus Geldolphus Vander,  
     71 n. 23  
 Bunyan, John, 197 n. 2, 201, 203  
 Burg, Hermanus van den, 275 n. 24  
 Burmania, 187 n. 33  
 Burmannus, Petrus 67 n. 7, 87 n. 94  
 Burnet, Gilbert, 205  
 Burton, Robert, 285 n. 51  
 Bus, Catharina, 81 n. 68  
 Bynkershoek, Cornelis van, 7, 267–295  
  
 Calvin, John, 2, 5, 125–126, 142–145,  
     146 n. 10, 151, 155–157, 163, 201,  
     276, 279  
 Camphuysen, Dirck Raphaëlsz., 57  
     n. 22  
 Canfield, Benoît de, 298 n. 6, 310  
     n. 26  
 Carolus Emmanuel Pius of Savoy, 84  
 Carondelet, Jean, 1  
 Casallo, 112  
 Cathden, Joost, 187  
 Catullus, 72 n. 29  
 Cau, Cornelis, 65 n. 2  
 Caxton, William, 12  
 Cayas, Gabriel, 103  
 Charles II  
     King of England, 204  
 Charles V  
     Emperor, 13 n. 10, 15–16, 20, 22,  
     30  
 Christian II  
     King of Denmark, 22  
 Chrysostom, St John, 7, 222–223, 223  
     n. 4, 244  
 Chrysostome de Saint-Lo, 300 n. 9,  
     318  
 Cicero, Marcus Tullius, 116, 137, 224  
 Claes, Elsie, 191 n. 49  
 Clement VIII, Pope, 59, 84, 181  
 Clerc, J. le, 275 n. 25  
 Cnobbaert, Ioannes, 88  
 Coberger, Wenceslas, 70  
 Cocceius, Johannes, 282, 282 n. 46  
 Cochelet, Anastasius, 85, 85 n. 85  
 Codde, Pieter, 184 nn. 22–23, 185  
     n. 26, 187 n. 37, 188 n. 41, 189,  
     189 nn. 43, 45, 190 n. 47  
 Colbert, Jean-Baptiste, 289  
 Colin, Michiel, 57, 57 n. 26, 64  
 Colius, Jacob, (Ortelianus), 94,  
     122–130  
 Collaert, Adriaen, 75  
  
 Combe, La, 299  
 Confucius, 293  
 Constantine the Great  
     Emperor, 169, 251, 289  
 Cool, Jacob, father of Jacob Colius,  
     117–119, 121–123  
 Coopmans, Gerardt, 183, 183 n. 16,  
     186, 186 n. 30  
 Coornhert, Dirck Volckertszoon, 56  
     n. 22, 94, 124–125, 127, 130–131,  
     131 n. 110, 132, 132 nn. 112–114,  
     133–134, 134 n. 117, 138  
 Corput, Abraham van de, 210  
 Corrozet, Gilles, 51 n. 7  
 Corselius, Gerardus, 73  
 Coster, Frans de, 36 n. 18, 38, 38  
     n. 25, 38 n. 29, 43–45, 59 n. 33  
 Costerus, Franciscus. See Coster,  
     Frans de  
 Court, Pieter de la, 286, 287 n. 56,  
     290  
 Cousturier, Paul, 307 n. 22  
 Coverdale, Miles, 10, 21, 21 n. 28, 22,  
     28–31, 107  
 Crellius, Christophorus, 211  
 Crellius, Samuel, 211  
 Crespin, Jean, 257  
 Croze, Cornand de la, 298 n. 6  
 Cunaeus, Petrus, 275  
 Cusanus, Nicolaus, 289  
 Cuyckius, Henricus, 67  
 Cyprian, 251, 261  
  
 Danckaerts, Sebastian, 108  
 Dausqueius, Claudius, 86  
 David, Joannes, 44–45, 298 n. 5  
 Dee, John, 109, 109 n. 54  
 Delrio, Martinus Antonius, 68  
 Demosthenes, 238, 238 n. 45, 243  
 Denaisius, Petrus, 85 n. 83  
 Descartes, René, 291  
 Dirxszoon, C., 189 n. 43, 190, 190  
     n. 46  
 Dirxszoon, Wouter, 186  
 Dobbuis, Johannes, 187  
 Doedijs, Hendrik, 269, 269 n. 7, 270,  
     270 n. 11, 272–275, 278, 289, 291,  
     295  
 Drenckwaert, Jan van 72, 73 n. 31  
 Dronrijp, W., 183 n. 15  
 Dunton, John, 198 n. 3, 200–201, 219  
 Dussen, Pieter van der, 186  
 Dutoit-Membrini, Jean-Philippe, 300  
     n. 9, 308, 308 n. 24

- Eggius, Albert, 184  
 Eijckel, Elisabeth den, 191 n. 49  
 Elisabeth de Valois, Princess of France  
   (daughter of Henry II), 112  
 Elizabeth of Hungary, Saint, 69  
 Enschede, Izaak, 56 n. 22  
 Enzinas, Francisco de, 22  
 Erasmus, Desiderius, 5, 9, 12–14, 21,  
   24–28, 31, 77 n. 56, 142–144, 163,  
   222, 225–230, 236, 240, 241 n. 52,  
   242–244, 257  
 Ernest of Bavaria, Prince-Bishop of  
   Liège, 68  
 Ernst of Austria, Archduke, 128  
 Eschius, Nicholas, 123, 123 n. 90, 124,  
   137  
 Essen, Joannes van, 16  
 Eusebius of Caesarea, 19  
 Eyk, Jan van, 213, 219  
  
 Faber, Johann, 209–210  
 Fabri, Christopher, 255  
 Fabricius, Franciscus, 221, 221  
   n. 1, 222, 230–232, 237–244  
 Falconi, 298 n. 6  
 Farnese, Alexander, 89, 106, 121  
   Duke of Parma from 1586, 33, 37,  
   42–43  
 Felicitas, St, 257  
 Fénelon, François de Salignac de la  
   Mothe, 272 n. 15, 277, 293, 293  
   n. 72, 299  
 Ferdinand I, Emperor, 95, 111  
 Flaccius Illyricus, Matthias, 135  
 Floris IV, Earl of Holland and  
   Zealand, 69  
 Fokke, Simon, 277, 277 n. 32  
 Francis I  
   King of France, 20  
 Francius, Petrus, 241–242, 244  
 Franck, Sebastian, 5, 56, 124, 124  
   n. 92, 125–126, 130, 135, 137  
 Frangipani, Ottavio Mirto, 83  
 Frellon, Brothers, 50  
 Frisius, Gemma, 97, 109, 109 n. 55  
  
 Galle, Cornelis, 75  
 Galle, Philips, 59–60, 135  
 Galle, Theodore, 60  
 Gardin de Mortaigne, Louis du, 85  
 Gastius, J., 209 n. 21  
 Geldenhouwer, Gerard, 25  
 Gerdes, Daniël, 211, 211 n. 26  
 Gerson, Jean, 123 n. 90  
  
 Gestel, Arnoud van, 190  
 Ghelen, Jan van, 13, 26, 28, 30  
 Gillies, John, 212, 219  
 Goltzius, Hendrick, 59  
 Grapheus, Cornelius, 108, 123 n. 90  
 Grave, Claes de, 11  
 Gregory the Great, Pope, 50 n. 4  
 Gregory the Great, St, 251  
 Greve, Wilhelmus, 217–219  
 Grey, Lady Jane, 258  
 Grotius, Hugo, 267  
 Grynaeus, Simon, 209–211, 217–218  
 Guicciardini, Ludovico, 33  
 Guyon, Jeanne-Marie de la Mothe, 7,  
   297–318  
  
 Haeften, Benedictus van, 304  
 Haemstede, Adriaen Cornelisz. van,  
   110–111, 257  
 Haestens, Henrick van, 79 n. 64  
 Hallincq, Cornelius, 190  
 Haren, Jean, 38–39  
 Harff, Agnes von, 249, 256  
 Harff, Eva von, 255  
 Harff, Sybilla von, 249, 256  
 Hartius, Otho, 72, 73 n. 31  
 Hattem, Pontiaan van, 283  
 Hauchinus, Johannes 67 n. 6  
 Heemskerck, Maarten van, 51  
 Heinsius, Daniël, 275  
 Henry II, Duke of Brabant, 69  
 Henry II, King of France, 112  
 Henry, Philip, 200  
 Herentals, Thomas van, 24, 29  
 Hermens, Adrianus, 184  
 Heymbach, Bernard, 69 n. 17, 71  
   n. 23, 80, 88  
 Heyns, Peter, 89, 92 n. 7, 121, 121  
   n. 86, 138  
 Hiël. See: Barrefelt  
 Hillen van Hoochstraten, Michiel, 17  
   n. 19, 22–23, 27–28, 30  
 Hofman, Johan, 204 n. 6  
 Holbein, Hans, 51 n. 7  
 Homfeld, Otto, 307  
 Hooft, Arnout Helleman, 187 n. 33  
 Hoornbeeck, Johannes, 231, 235–236  
 Hop, Cornelis, 187 n. 33  
 Hopperus, Joachim, 36, 36 n. 14  
 Horace, 123, 275, 277 n. 33  
 Horst, Aert van der, 70 n. 20  
 Houthaak, Thymon, 58 n. 29, 64  
 Hovius, Johannes, 73, 75, 76 n. 54,  
   77–87

- Hovius, Matthias, 67 n. 6, 75–77, 88  
Hugo, Herman, 297, 297 nn. 3–4, 298, 300–304, 304 n. 13, 305, 308–309, 309 n. 25, 310–311, 311 n. 28, 313, 313 n. 31, 314–317  
Hulst, Francis van der, 16  
Huygens, Constantijn, 227 n. 13, 244, 248, 248 n. 9, 265  
Hyperius, Andreas, 227 n. 14  
  
Ignatius of Antioch, 259, 263, 265  
Ignatius of Loyola, 58 n. 31, 59, 64  
Innocent III  
    Pope (Lotario di Segni), 281 n. 40  
Innocent X, Pope, 298 n. 6  
Innocent XII  
    Pope (Antonio Pignatelli), 293 n. 72  
Isabella, infanta (Isabel Clara Eugenia, Archduchess), 66, 66 n. 4, 68, 68 n. 13, 73 n. 35, 75 n. 47, 76, 80 n. 64, 82 n. 73, 88, 303  
  
Jacobus, F., 191 n. 51  
James II  
    King of England, 272 n. 15  
Jerome, St, 12, 23–24, 26–27, 251  
Jiménez, Diego, 59, 62 n. 40  
Jode, Gerard de, 51, 115  
John of the Cross, St, 310 n. 26, 313, 317  
Jonge, Theodore de, 191  
Joris, David, 56 n. 22, 99–100, 135, 310 n. 26  
Joye, George, 10, 21–22, 30  
Jungius, J.H., 231 n. 21, 244  
Juvenal, 274–275, 277  
  
Kaetz, Peter, 18–19  
Keckermann, Bartholomaeus, 228–230, 236, 240, 243–244  
Kempe, Margery, 262  
Kempis, Thomas à, 252, 260  
Kettler, Goswin de, 186 n. 33  
Kitto, Joh., 278 n. 5  
Knibbe, David, 231, 231 n. 22, 236, 236 nn. 38–39, 237, 242, 244  
Knight, 212  
Knol, Jan, 235  
Koelman, Jacobus, 202–203, 248, 265, 282, 282 n. 45, 283 n. 47, 285 n. 52  
Kok, A.L., 234 n. 33, 244  
Kuhlman, Quirinus, 282 n. 45  
  
La Reynie, 305, 306 n. 19, 307, 318  
Labadie, Jean de, 7, 247–250, 261–262, 264–265  
Lacombe, 298 n. 6  
Lakeman, Balthasar, 309 n. 25  
Lampson, Dominic, 128–129, 129 n. 107  
Lamzweerde, Alexander van, 185, 190  
Landry, 303  
Ledesma Buitrago, Alonso de, 303  
Leeuwen, Simon van, 65 n. 2  
Lefèvre d'Etaples, Jacques, 4, 9–11, 20, 22, 27, 31  
Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, 217  
Leiden, Jan van, 286 n. 55  
Lemens, Clara von, 255  
Lempereur, Martin, 20–21, 30  
Lessius, Leonardus, 68  
Lettersnyder, Cornelis Henricz, 13  
Leuter, Pieter, 294  
Liesvelt, Hansken van, 19  
Liesvelt, Jacob van, 13, 19, 19 n. 23, 23, 27, 31  
Limburg, Gillis van, 269 n. 6, 270, 270 n. 9  
Lipsius, Justus, 5, 56 n. 20, 65–88, 94, 104, 104 n. 39, 118, 118 n. 77, 120, 122, 125, 126–127, 130, 133, 135, 275  
Lobedianus, Arnoldus, 270 n. 11  
Long, Isaac, 6, 18  
Losel, Philippus, 204 n. 15  
Losthouse, Thomas, 208  
Louis XIV  
    King of France, 214, 293 n. 72  
Love, Nicholas, 12  
Lucas, Jean-Maximilien, 286  
Lucian, 275  
Lucretius, 287  
Ludolph of Saxony, 11, 26  
Luther, Martin, 1–2, 9, 13–15, 17, 17 n. 19, 18–19, 21–22, 25, 27–29, 29 n. 39, 50, 108, 123 n. 90, 156  
Luzvic, Etienne, 297 n. 5  
  
Machario, 184 n. 18  
Machiavelli, Niccolò, 287  
Maillard, Mariane, 214  
Malaval, 298 n. 6  
Malcotius, Libertus, 115  
Manaraeus, Oliverius, 75, 76, 84 n. 79  
Mangot, Mme, 214  
Manlius, J., 209 n. 21

- Maresius, Samuel, 248, 265  
 Marnix van St Aldegonde, Philip, 120  
 Marteau, Pierre, 282 n. 44  
 Martinus, David, 72 n. 29, 88  
 Martinus, Johannes, 231, 235, 244  
 Mather, Increase, 199, 200, 202 n. 12, 203, 219  
 Mathilde of Brabant, 69  
 Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, 75 n. 47  
 Maxentius  
   Emperor, 289 n. 60  
 Mayer, Johann Friedrich, 278  
 Meerman, Gerard, 276 n. 26  
 Meerte, Henri, 70  
 Melanchthon, Philip, 111, 209–211, 222, 225–227, 244, 229–230, 235–236, 244  
 Menestrier, Jean-Claude, 310  
 Mensinck, Philippus, 184 n. 23  
 Mercator, Gerard, 96 n. 17, 109  
 Metelen, 184  
 Meteren, Emanuel van, 94, 107–108, 110–112, 114–115, 127, 138–139  
 Meteren, Jacob van, 107–108  
 Metsius, Laurentius 35 n. 11, 36  
 Meurs, Jean, 297 n. 2  
 Meyer, Lodewijk, 234 n. 32, 244  
 Millar, Robert, 207, 219  
 Milton, John, 227 n. 14, 244  
 Miraeus, Aubertus, 72–74  
 Miraeus, Johannes, 74–77, 84 n. 79  
 Modet, Hermannus, 114  
 Molière, J.-B., 277, 306–307  
 Molinos, Miguel de, 298 n. 6  
 Montenay, Georgette de, 297 n. 5  
 Montmorency, François de, 72 n. 29  
 Moore, Dorothea, 256, 258 n. 47  
 Moretus, Balthasar I, 69 n. 16, 72 n. 29, 73, 73 n. 33, 74 n. 41, 75–76, 76 n. 52, 84, 84 n. 81, 85 n. 88  
 Moretus, Jan II, 60  
 Moretus, Johannes I, 73, 73 n. 31, 85  
 Morillon, Maximilian, 35  
 Moulin, Marie du, 248, 256  
 Mylius, Arnold, 94, 101, 101 n. 34, 109, 115, 135  
 Nadal, Jerome, 4, 49, 52, 58–62, 64  
 Natalis, Hieronymus. *See* Nadal, Jerome  
 Naylor, James, 286  
 Neercassel, Johannes van, 184–189, 190, 191 n. 49, 192, 193 n. 57  
 Nicholas, Brother, 16  
 Nicolaes, Hendrik, 53 n. 12, 55, 90–94, 99–100, 103–105, 116, 124–125, 131, 133, 135, 138–139  
 Nieuwland, Nicolaas van, 149 n. 14  
 Nieuwland, Petrus, 210–211, 217, 219  
 Nigri, Philip, 35 n. 8  
 Nispen, Amandus van, 189  
 Noot, Jan van der  
   printer, 11  
 Noviomagus, Guilielmus Fabricius, 74  
 Numan, Philip, 75–77, 79 n. 61, 80, 81 n. 68, 84 n. 79, 85, 85 n. 86  
 Nutius, Martinus, 60, 64, 297 n. 2  
 Oosterwijck, Albert van, 84, 84 n. 83, 85, 85 n. 86, 86  
 Origen, 287  
 Ornia, Gerbrand, 186 n. 33  
 Ortelianus. *See* Colius, Jacobus  
 Ortelius, Abraham, 5, 89–92, 94–137  
 Ortels, Anne, 128 n. 102  
 Ortels, Leonard, 107  
 Ottoboni, 280  
 Oudaert, Nicolaas, 67, 67 n. 7, 74–76, 84 n. 79  
 Ovid, 49, 277, 288  
 Owen, John, 203 n. 15, 204–205, 260 n. 55  
 Pantinus, Petrus, 84 n. 79  
 Paradin, Claude, 51  
 Paul IV, Pope, 113, 149 n. 14  
 Pedersen, Christiern, 4, 9–11, 22, 27  
 Peetersen van Middlburg, Henric, 19  
 Pelt, Johan, 13, 24  
 Penyn, Franchoy de, 16  
 Pérez, Luis, 94  
 Perkins, William, 227, 227 n. 14, 228–230, 233–236, 244  
 Perpetua, St, 257  
 Persius, 275  
 Peter the Great, Czar, 281  
 Petri, Olaus, 9  
 Petronius Arbitr, 275, 277  
 Pfalz, Elisabeth von der, 256  
 Philip II, King of Spain, 36, 67 n. 6, 68, 90, 110 n. 56, 112, 116  
 Philip III, King of Spain, 68  
 Pierre, Jean de la, 297 n. 4, 309 n. 25, 317

- Pieters, Winine, 184, 184 n. 19  
 Pietersz., Doen, 13–14, 17, 19  
 Pietersz., Pieter, 153  
 Plantin, Christopher, 52–53, 53 n. 12,  
 56–57, 59, 60, 60 n. 34, 63, 67, 67  
 n. 7, 89, 90 n. 3, 91, 93–94, 96,  
 99–104, 106, 115, 117, 120–122,  
 123 n. 90, 132, 132 n. 114, 133,  
 135–136, 138, 139  
 Plato, 137  
 Pliny, 26, 116–117, 120  
 Poelenburg, Gijsbert, 148 n. 13  
 Poirer, Pierre, 7, 297 n. 4, 298–299,  
 299 n. 9, 300–310, 310 n. 27,  
 311–312, 315–317  
 Polanco, Juan de, 36 n. 18  
 Polycarpus, St, 257  
 Poole, Matthew, 199–200  
 Postel, Guillaume, 56 n. 20, 89,  
 95–96, 96 n. 17, 97–98, 99–105,  
 115, 134–135, 138  
 Prochnicius, Johannes Andreas, 84  
 Proost, Jacob, 14, 15  
 Pruynen, Cornelius, 128–129  
 Puente, Luis de la, 60  
 Puteanus, Erycius, 79, 86  
 Putten, Louis van der, 185 n. 27, 190  
 Quintilian, 229, 235, 238, 244  
 Rabelais, François, 277, 285  
 Rabus, Ludwig, 257  
 Rabus, Pieter, 271  
 Raphaelengius, Franciscus, 53, 56, 56  
 n. 22, 57, 57 n. 23, 64, 84  
 Ravensteyn, Henricus, 243–244  
 Reboul, Pierre, 86 n. 93  
 Reder, Nicholas, 188  
 Requesens, Luis de, 36  
 Rhetius, Guilielmus, 109, 109 n. 55  
 Richeome, Louis, 61, 62 n. 39  
 Rivet, André, 258, 258 n. 47  
 Rode, Hinne, 25  
 Rodriguez, Alphons, 60  
 Roëll, Herman Alexander, 271,  
 282–283  
 Rouillé, Guillaume, 50  
 Rovenius, Philip, 191, 192 n. 52  
 Rudierd, E., 199 n. 6  
 Rudolph II, Emperor, 85  
 Ruremund, Christoffel van, 18, 27–28,  
 30  
 Ruremund, Hans van, 18–19  
 Ruysbroeck, Jan van, 11  
 Sadeler, Jan, 59  
 Saldenus, Guilielmus, 231, 235, 235  
 n. 36, 236, 244  
 Salomon, Bernard, 51 n. 7  
 Saravia, Adriaan, 56 n. 20, 136, 136  
 n. 121  
 Satfaen, Hendrik van, 184  
 Savage, 214  
 Scaliger, Josephus Justus, 84, 84 n. 81  
 Schabaelje, Dierick, 58 n. 30, 64  
 Schabaelje, Jan Philipsz, 52 n. 11, 58,  
 64  
 Scheltus, Jacobus, 65 n. 2  
 Schinkel, Bruyn Harmansz., 84 n. 82  
 Scholasticus, Socrates, 214  
 Schoondonck, Aegidius, 86  
 Schottus, Andreas, 76, 122  
 Schurman, Anna Maria van, 7,  
 247–249, 255–265  
 Schurman, Frederik van, senior, 255  
 Schurman, Frederik van, junior, 255  
 Schurman, Johan Godschalk van, 249,  
 256  
 Scribani, Carolus, 60, 76 n. 54  
 Sellius Noviomagus, Bernardus, 57, 64  
 Seneca, 76, 137  
 Servetus, Michael 56 n. 22  
 Seversz., Jan, 14  
 Silvius, Willem, 115  
 Singleton, 212  
 Smit, Jan, 307  
 Someren, van, 189  
 Sonnius, Laurent, 62 n. 39  
 Sophie of Thüringen, 69  
 Spanheim, Frederik, 257  
 Spinoza, Baruch de, 277, 283 n. 49,  
 287 n. 56  
 Spira, 201  
 Stalpart, Theodorus, 186 n. 31  
 Stoupe, Jean-Baptiste, 3, 282  
 Straffinvelt, 189  
 Streithagen, Andreas von, 86  
 Studley, 211–213  
 Sucquet, Antoine, 304  
 Suderman, Jan, 309, 309 n. 25  
 Sweerts, Franciscus, 122  
 Sylvester I, St  
 Pope, 289 n. 61  
 Tauler, Johannes, 123, 123 n. 90, 124,  
 130, 137, 309, 310 n. 26  
 Teellinck, Willem, 231–234, 236, 244,  
 285  
 Temminck, Franciscus, 187 n. 37

- Theodosius the Great, Emperor, 169  
 Thienwinckel, Godefridus van, 70  
 Thomson, Georges, 86  
 Til, Salomon van, 231, 232 n. 22, 236–237, 241, 245  
 Tinga, Joannes, 192  
 Titelmans, Franciscus, 24–25, 29  
 Torre, Jacob de la, 187  
 Torrentius, Laevinus, 37, 38 n. 29, 41, 42 n. 41, 47, 67, 67 n. 6, 106, 121–122, 128, 129, 138  
 Tournes, Jean de, 50  
 Trajan  
   Emperor, 259  
 Trechsel, Brothers, 50  
 Trelcatius, L., 230  
 Tudor, Mary, 258  
 Turner, William, 6, 198, 198 n. 3, 200–219  
 Tyndale, William, 4, 9–11, 21–22, 27, 29–31  
  
 Urban VIII, Pope, 173 n. 30, 176  
 Ussher, James, 206  
  
 Valla, Lorenzo, 289 n. 61  
 Veen, Otto van, 297–298, 300–305, 307–309, 309 n. 25, 310, 311 n. 28, 313–317  
 Velp, Roelof van, 70 n. 20  
 Velpius, Rutger, 76 n. 48, 85 nn. 86–87  
 Velsen, Margareta van, 191 n. 49  
 Verdussen, Jeroen, 85 n. 86  
 Verhaelen, 188  
 Verheyde, Jacob, 309 n. 25  
 Verheyde, Nicolaas, 309 n. 25  
 Verrijn, Martinus, 190  
 Verschoor, Jacobus, 283  
 Verschuren, 191  
 Villerius, Dionysius, 71  
 Visscher, Claes Jansz., 57  
 Visscher, Nicolas, 50  
 Viringa, Campegius, 231, 232 n. 22, 237, 241, 244  
 Voes, Henricus, 16  
 Voetius, Gisbertus, 202, 202 n. 12, 247–248, 257, 259–260, 262, 262 n. 65, 265, 282  
 Voragine, Jacobus de, 288 n. 59  
 Vorm, Johannes van der, 244  
 Vorsterman, Willem, 17, 20, 22–25, 28, 30, 31  
 Vos, Adam, 183  
 Vos, Maarten de, 51  
 Vosmeer, Sasbout, 177, 181–183, 184 nn. 19, 23, 185–187, 189 n. 43, 190 n. 46, 191–192  
 Vosmeer, Tilman, 186  
 Vossius, Isaac, 286, 287 n. 56  
 Vrintius, Johannes Baptista, 85 n. 85  
 Vulcanius, Bonaventura, 120, 134 n. 118, 135, 138  
  
 Waal, Samuel de, 216, 216 n. 35  
 Walaeus, Antonius, 234, 234 n. 33, 236, 244  
 Wallace, Samuel, 215–216  
 Walvis, Ignatius, 184  
 Waterlant, Claas van, 147  
 Waterlant, Mouwerijn van, 147  
 Welser, Marcus, 78 n. 59, 86  
 Wetstein, Henrik, 297, 297 n. 4, 298, 309  
 Weyerman, Jacob Campo, 248, 249 n. 10, 275  
 Wichmans, Augustinus, 65 n. 3  
 Wier, Arnoldus, 189  
 Wierix, Antoine, 297 n. 5, 302  
 Wierix, Brothers, 59–60, 60 n. 36–37, 64  
 Willems, Claertgen, 186  
 William I, Prince of Orange, 120, 136  
 William III  
   Stadholder of Holland, King of England, 205, 214, 275  
 Wiringus, Johannes Walterius, 84 n. 82  
 Witsius, Herman, 202  
 Wolff, August de, 191  
 Wolff, Christian, Freiherr (Baron) von, 217  
 Wolzogen, Ludovicus, 241–242  
  
 Ximénez de Cisneros, Francisco  
   Cardinal, 23–24  
 Ximenez, Ferdinand, 59 n. 34  
  
 Zangré, Théodore C. De, 71 n. 23  
 Zangrius, Philippus, 79 n. 64  
 Zoet, Jan, 235  
 Zwingli, Ulrich, 2, 5, 142–143, 156